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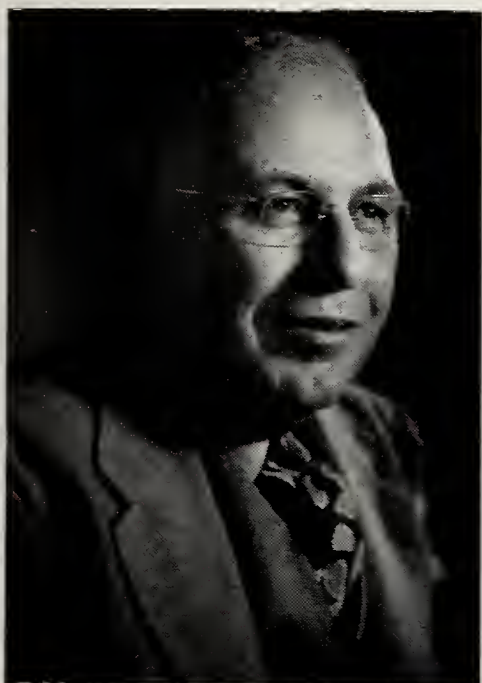
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# The Story Of An American Family

By Lucile Driftmier Verness

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**M. H. DRIFTMIER**  
January, 1950



**LEANNA FIELD DRIFTMIER**  
January, 1950

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## Why This Story Was Written

A good many years ago when Mother was rounding out her first decade of radio visits she began a series of articles that answered for her friends who read the Kitchen-Klatter magazine many of the questions that had been asked about her parents, her girlhood home, her experiences as a teacher, her marriage, and the outstanding events in her busy years as a homemaker. She honestly believed, when these articles came to an end, that the matter had been settled for all time—but her family and friends felt otherwise! Every passing year brought new friends and repeated requests for copies of these articles that by this time were completely unavailable. It was agreed by everyone concerned that action of some kind would have to be taken, but what kind of action was the stumbling block. Mother has never enjoyed writing about herself and the prospect of starting such a story once again very definitely lacked appeal! In the meantime we seven Driftmier children had grown up sufficiently to appreciate Mother's articles and to realize, in addition, that a more complete family history should be made before events slipped beyond memory. Any of us could have done this, but I happen to type more swiftly than the others and consequently I was delegated to put down a straightforward, unembellished account of things exactly as they happened, the good things and the bad things, the happy things and the sad things. This I have attempted to do, as honestly as possible. The story was begun when I lived in Hollywood, California and the first chapter appeared in our Kitchen-Klatter magazine in July, 1943. Thereafter it appeared monthly (but with few exceptions) until the concluding chapter that was written in September, 1950. If you have read any of this account in days gone by you will have the comfortable feeling of coming upon something familiar as you turn these pages. If you have picked this up not knowing what to expect, I must warn you that you will look in vain through these pages for stirring, earth-shaking events. These events go hand in hand with remarkable people—and we're not that kind at all. We're just small-town, Midwestern Americans who have been fortunate enough to claim you as our friends.

—Lucile Driftmier Verness

—Shenandoah, Iowa, 1950

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# The Story Of An American Family

When we were children the words "Sunnyside Farm" were magic. They called up everything exciting and remarkable that we dreamed about, and when we drove from Clarinda to Shenandoah we always had a race to see which one of us would be the first to spy the long row of trees just over the crest of a hill that marked one boundary of Sunnyside Farm.

This was the farm on which Mother had been born and reared. It was very much like other Iowa farms that lie close to town, farms that have big barns with cupolas, many flowers and trees, large vegetable gardens and surrounding acres planted to corn, wheat and oats; but the things that happened on this farm always seemed particularly wonderful to us because the Field family had had such a happy life there. Our favorite stories were the stories Mother told about the things that took place on Sunnyside Farm, and we always wanted her to start at the very beginning and tell us everything.

The very beginning goes back to 1868. That was the year Grandfather Field, a native of South Deerfield, Massachusetts, came to Page County, Iowa, and bought the farm that was to become Sunnyside. He was a veteran of the Civil War (how proud we were many years later to see him ride with the other veterans in the Fourth of July parades), and had served the Union with a company of men made up of his former students at the Academy in Knoxville, Illinois.

At the conclusion of the war he returned to Knoxville and went on the road selling yarn that was manufactured in a small woolen mill in which he owned a part interest. That was how he happened to meet Grandmother Field, for she was part owner of a millinery store in Toulon, Illinois, and he called on this store to sell some yarn.

Grandmother Field (her maiden name was Celestia Eastman) was born on a farm near Toulon. Her father joined the Gold rush in 1849, and because of the uncertainty of the mails between Illinois and California he did not know until he returned home in 1851 that his wife had been dead for two years, and that relatives were caring for his farm and the two little girls, Lettie and Eliza. Some time later he married again, and the new mother made a real home for her little stepchildren. As a young woman Grandmother Field taught school and then bought a part interest in the millinery store where Grandfather Field met her.

It was at a county fair in Toulon, however, that their friendship really began. Business men of the town volunteered to keep the grounds in order, and since they went to work at four o'clock in the morning the church women decided to prepare their breakfast. It was a miserable hour to go down to the fairgrounds

and help serve a meal, but Grandmother Field offered to help; and as a result she found herself pouring coffee for the business man who called on her at the millinery store with woolen yarns.

They were engaged when Grandfather Field decided to go west and buy some land, for farming appealed to him more than manufacturing and selling yarns. Grandmother Field must have had a few qualms about leaving a settled community and going into pioneer country, but she promised to return with him when he came for her after the crops were planted and a shanty was built.

That all of their plans worked out as they had hoped is attested to by a letter written on November 7, 1870. At that time Grandfather Field sat down and wrote to his aged father in Massachusetts. This letter was found among his father's papers following his death, and returned to the son who had written it. All through the eighty years that have passed since then it has been carefully preserved.

Toulon, Illinois,  
Nov. 7th, 1870

"Dear Father:

When one is happy he always wants to share his joy with those most dear to him, and I felt that Father should come first on the list. Your poor boy has been cuffed about the world a good deal since he went out with his Father's blessing, but I feel at rest now. I have a home and a wife who is just such a woman as our dear sainted Harriet.

"I have worked very hard since I went to Iowa, but have had God's best blessing 'the love of a fine woman'—to sustain me and have accomplished a great deal. I have my eighty acres fenced and nearly all under the plow, a snug little house that I built all myself, a stable, sheds, yards, and a well—and the first of last April it was a bare tract of prairie with the rank growth of wild grass alone on it.

"I have a heavy team of horses that will be five years old next spring, and a nice little brood mare seven years old besides a two year old colt. I raised a fine lot of corn by cutting it through the sod with a corn planter, and lots of nice pumpkins, squash, buckwheat, beans and potatoes. I often think how you would enjoy making a farm here if you were a young man, but you have done your share.

"We have a small debt on our land, but with willing hands to help we will be able to clear it off before long if we continue to be blessed with the good health that has always been the lot of both of us.

"My wife's name was Celestia J. Eastman. We were married yesterday morning before church at her father's house. We shall visit at Knoxville this week and be back here at a family gathering on Thanksgiving, and shall then leave for home soon after.

"I am very sad because I cannot come to you with your new daughter. I know she would love her new father and that you would love her, but I have had to practice the most rigid economy to be able to fit up our home, and even if we had the money for so long a journey it would be our duty to use it in making our home comfortable. I did not know where the money would come from for my trip to Illinois, but just in the time of need a dear kind friend came to my aid even at his own inconvenience.

"Mother or Frank can answer this letter for you. Let me have my Father's prayers and blessing. With love to all, I remain your loving son, Solomon."

Grandmother Field stepped off a box car at a place on the prairie called Shenandoah, Iowa, in 1870. It is hard for us grandchildren to realize that the town we know so well didn't exist at all, and that she and Grandfather Field didn't drive over the familiar road to Sunnyside Farm but rode horseback through deep prairie grass to the shanty that was waiting. It was a real shanty too, neither lathed nor plastered, and it probably needed a woman's hand very badly, for Grandfather Field and a friend who owned the adjoining land had kept batch in it for several months.

There was almost nothing to do with, of course, but in no time at all that shanty had been papered with newspapers and pictures, and there were white flour sack curtains at the windows. The dining table was a threshing machine platform hinged to the wall, but there was a niche in this wall that held the books of poetry that Grandmother Field loved and had brought with her from Illinois.

That first winter both Grandmother and Grandfather Field taught school. Grandmother rode a pony covered only with a blanket to teach the first school in Shenandoah. This blanket was one that Grandfather crocheted from heavy rough yarn that had been made in his Toulon factory, and it was really more than just a blanket; it fitted around the pony's neck and chest and covered its whole body. Early in the morning while Grandmother packed their lunches and tidied up the two rooms, Grandfather put this blanket on the pony and then they rode away in opposite directions to their schools. Grandmother's ride took her right over the hill where our family home stands today.

After Henry was born Grandmother gave up her teaching. These next years were hard and busy ones for there was all the work that comes with a growing family and none of the modern conveniences that make daily chores more simple. Added to this was the fact that both Grandmother and Grandfather were extremely hospitable, and although two more rooms had been built on to the shanty the



house was always full. Not only were needy relatives entertained for months at a time, but total strangers traveling by covered wagon to homesteads in Nebraska and Kansas could find help at the Field home.

In stormy or cold weather these weary travelers asked to come into the house to sleep, and they were never refused. Many times there were so many beds made up on the kitchen floor that Grandfather Field couldn't get to the stove to build a fire! And when there was a tired mother with a little baby Grandmother Field always insisted on giving them a good hot breakfast before they started out on the next lap of their journey. Mother has told us that she remembers one wagon that had painted on the cover in large letters: "TO KANSAS OR BUST"; and two years later the same wagon came back, but this time it read: "BUSTED, BY THUNDER". The sorry times in other sections of the country were very real to the Field children for with their own eyes they saw the defeated homesteaders who had gone by earlier so confident.

Grandfather Field was to know some of these hard times himself, for one year all of the crops were lost in two days by clouds of grasshoppers. And another year corn was so cheap that bushels of it were burned for fuel. But these blows, hard as they were, could not compare to the blow that came when they lost Stephen. He was eighteen months old when he died, and so vividly had his memory been kept alive that when we were small children and recited off the names of our uncles and aunts we always included Stephen—and he had been gone for nearly fifty years. Mother named one of her children in his memory; Wayne's full name is Stephen Wayne.

This was the only death that the Field family was to know for many, many years. There were countless close calls, of course (the two most narrow escapes were illnesses that struck Mother), but in the days when a large family faced the fact that it might lose two or three children, they lost only Stephen.

Eventually the family grew so large that the original shanty, even with its numerous additions, literally couldn't hold them and a large brick house was built. Not only were there now four children, Henry, Helen, Martha and Jessie, but there were aged relatives who needed a home, and always at least one girl who wasn't going to get a chance in this world unless Grandmother and Grandfather Field took her in. Some of these girls were with them for years and always regarded the Field home as their own home. They returned after they were married to visit and show off their own youngsters, and so much a part of the family did they seem to be that when we were small we never could quite figure out if they were really "Aunts" or just aunts!

Not long ago there was a letter from one of the girls who had once lived with them, and she recalled something that none of us had ever heard



My grandmother, Mrs. S. E. Field, and her first baby, Henry Field. Taken from an old tin-type.

before. She said that once when Le-anna was a baby only four or five months old she got her head caught between the bars of the crib, and Grandmother sent her at once for the butcher knife hoping to cut out one of the slats with it. The wood was too hard and they made no progress at all, so Grandmother sent her to the barn for a keyhole saw. She didn't know a keyhole saw from any other saw and consequently brought back four saws! They took turns sawing while the other person held her head and comforted her, for naturally she was scared to death with this terrific racket in her ears. At last they succeeded in getting the slats out so that she could be freed from the crib. This little incident is one that Mother had never heard before either—it isn't often that we can surprise her in such a fashion!

There was a tremendous amount of work to be done, and Grandmother insisted upon order both inside and out. She never went to bed at night without straightening the living rooms and having the kitchen clean, for as she said, "You never know when you may have to call the doctor during the night." This particular habit has certainly carried on because I can remember Mother saying the identical words when she asked us to help her put things in order just before we went to bed. And now in my own home many years later I find myself straightening up the living room and even going out to wash the supper dishes very late because "you never know when you may have to call the doctor during the night."

Grandmother said that she didn't love to cook, but she did it faithfully and well. All of the children remember her good bread, graham gems, rough and readies, floating islands, cup custards and baked apples. Two of these things, bread and floating islands, are Mother's specialties as well, and I never make floating islands in my own home without thinking of Mother, and then of Grand-

mother Field who first started the tradition.

In those days the distance from one end of the county to the other was a great trip, and consequently Mother didn't know until many years later that during the time she was growing up on Sunnyside Farm, Dad was growing up in another section of Page County.

When we were little children growing up in Clarinda, Iowa, and took long rides with Mother and Dad on Sunday afternoon, we liked to drive past two farms north of town. One of these farms was where Dad was born in 1881, and the other farm was the one that his Grandmother and Grandfather Driftmier settled on in 1866 immediately following the end of the Civil War.

Even when we were very young, we understood that Dad's Great-Grandfather, Klaumer Driftmier, had left Germany in 1832 because he was dissatisfied with conditions there and felt that America offered opportunities for a better life. He himself was subject to compulsory military service and fought in the battle of Waterloo under General Blucher (as youngster we thought that this battle took place at Waterloo, Iowa!), but he wanted his children to grow up in a country that was not military-minded. Our middle west is full of people of German ancestry who left their native country for the same reason.

With his wife and six weeks old baby, Joseph Henry, they left Europe in a sailing vessel that took nine weeks to cross the Atlantic. Frederick said that he thought of this when he crossed the Atlantic in a few hours by plane one-hundred and ten years later. The family finally landed in Baltimore, and after several years spent in various eastern cities they last settled on a farm in southern Indiana a short distance from Seymour. By this time the baby had become a young man, and here, in 1855, he married our Great-Grandmother, Rosetta Moening; her parents had come from Germany too in 1830.

Our Grandfather, George G. Driftmier whom we knew very well and loved, was born on this farm south of Seymour, Indiana. He was six years old when his parents moved by riverboat and covered wagon to the farm north of Clarinda. As small children we can remember vividly hearing him tell about helping his father in the field when a neighbor came by on horseback and told them that he had just heard about President Lincoln's assassination in Washington.

"My father stopped plowing and cried," Grandfather said. "I was only a little boy but I understood that our country had lost a great and good man."

This story made Abraham Lincoln more real to us than anything we had heard or read in later years.

Great-Grandfather Driftmier had only a short time to improve this farm for he contracted typhoid fever and died at the age of thirty-nine. As small children we thought that he must have died as an old, old man, if



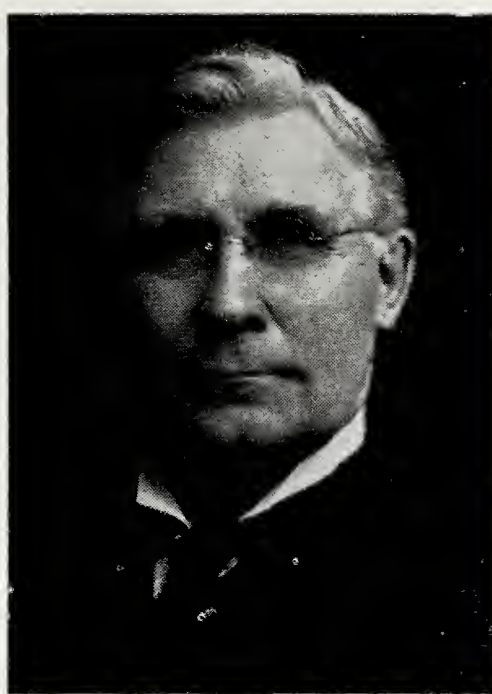
he was a pioneer and in our minds all pioneers were very old; but as we grew older we realized that he was really a young man and we had some conception of the struggle that our Great-Grandmother must have had with the responsibility of four small sons to rear and the farm to manage.

A few years later she married Henry Knost, and he proved himself such a kindly and good stepfather that throughout the years all of the family thought of him as the real Grandfather—there was no "step" about it. We remember him as a gentle, soft-spoken man who always let his little Great-Grandchildren tag after him when he went out to work in the garden, or to feed and water Ginger, the old horse that they kept many years after they moved to town. No one can ever recall hearing him speak a sharp or harsh word.

Grandfather George Driftmier married Melinda Niewedde in 1880, and they moved to the prairie farm northwest of Clarinda where Dad was born. Most of Dad's childhood memories are connected with the town of Clarinda, however, for the family moved there from the farm in the spring of 1887. After this they only visited in the country, and Dad has told us what excitement there was at Thanksgiving and Christmas when the family bundled into a bob-sled and went out to spend the holiday with their Grandmother and Grandfather Knost. The old poem, "Over the river and through the woods to Grandmother's house we go," might have been written specifically for them.

We never knew our Grandmother Driftmier for she died in 1900 shortly after Grandfather brought her home from a trip west where it had been hoped that she would regain her health. But she has always been real to us, not only because of her portrait that hung in the old family home in Clarinda, but also because her seven children always spoke of her with great respect and devotion. Her death was a crushing blow to the family. Dad, the eldest of the seven children, was only a young boy of nineteen when she died, and Aunt Anna, his sister, was only seventeen. Both of them felt most keenly the heavy responsibility that had fallen upon them with their mother's death, and together they made a home for their five younger brothers and sisters during the years that Grandfather Driftmier was on the road a great deal as a salesman.

In later years we seven children loved to go and visit at Grandfather Driftmier's house. We had a swing under the lilac tree, and Aunt Anna kept a collection of old dishes and spoons for us that we could use to dig with for endless hours. But even more important was the fact that in his home there were many, many books, and music. Grandfather Driftmier was a most unusual man and even as children we knew it. He had the mind of a scholar, and his interests extended far beyond the boundaries of the town in which he lived. He loved good music throughout all of his life, and by playing his records we first became acquainted with the great



George Driftmier, my grandfather.

names of music.

He was a singularly handsome man too. The picture on this page is one that I have always had with me, and only last year someone saw it on the wall of my home in California and said, "This man looks like a statesman at the turn of the century." It is true. Had Grandfather Driftmier been born at a later time when an education for the professional fields was available to the many rather than the few, he would have made an outstanding jurist or professor. As it is, his grandchildren are grateful that he lived until 1927 so that they had an opportunity to know him.

Two of Dad's sisters, Aunt Anna and Aunt Erna, were highly successful teachers, and how proud we were when other children said, "Miss Driftmier" but we could say, "Aunt Anna" or "Aunt Erna." They taught in Clarinda for a number of years before going on to larger school systems, and now Aunt Anna is the librarian in her home town. Aunt Clara married Paul Otte at our home in 1918 and moved to a farm not far from Clarinda, a farm where we children spent many happy times. Aunt Adelyn, Dad's youngest sister, married Albert Rope and also moved to a farm north of Clarinda. She too gave her little nieces and nephews from town many happy vacations in the country. Dad's brother, Bert, operates a mill here in Shenandoah, and the other brother, Harry, lives in Glendale, California.

In too many families it seems that only the relatives on one side of the house are close to growing children, but we have always been glad that in our family we knew Mother's and Dad's relatives equally well. We know now how much we might have missed had it not been this way.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mother was born on April 3, 1886 at Sunnyside Farm. She was named Leanna after an old school friend of her father's, and she has told us that when she was a child this seemed very romantic to her and she thought

that her mother was most unselfish to permit it! Certainly it's a name that is heard only rarely, although in recent years she has had quite a few little namesakes throughout these middlewestern states. One mother who had named her baby Leanna sent us a picture of the child, and she looked very much like the first pictures that were taken of Mother for her hair was also long, straight, and black. It was Mother's hair that was responsible for her nickname, "Little Chickawaw"; her brothers and sisters thought that she looked like an Indian papoose.

It is miraculous that we had the privilege of knowing Mother for she almost died when she was only a few months old. The summer of 1886 was unusually warm, and there were many cases of cholera infantum in the community. Mother became ill with this dreaded disease and in a short time she was too weak to cry. Good old Dr. Bailey made many trips to Sunnyside and did everything within his power to save the baby, but in a short time he had to tell Grandmother and Grandfather Field that nothing more could be done.

Aunt Helen and Aunt Martha have never forgotten this afternoon. They were down at the windmill tank waiting apprehensively for some word from the house when they saw Dr. Bailey's horse coming at a run up the road. In a little while they were told to come to the house, and when they tiptoed in they found Grandmother weeping and Dr. Bailey closing his bags. Nothing more could possibly be done.

Grandfather was standing beside the bed and when they asked him if they could kiss the baby he shook his head. No, she was too weak, but they could pat her little hand if they wished. And then, just at that moment Grandfather thought he saw the baby struggle for breath, and he picked her up instantly and called for someone to fill a small tub with warm water. Neighbors who had come in to help ran for the tub at once, although they were convinced that poor Mr. Field was beside himself and didn't realize what he was doing.

When the tub was brought he lowered the limp little body into it again and again. The baby gasped a few times and then began breathing more steadily. When Grandfather saw this he wrapped her in a warm blanket and offered her a small quantity of milk. She hadn't eaten anything for days, and when the family saw her purse her lips and begin taking the milk they all laughed and cried together. She had been such a dear, good little baby that they didn't see how they could give her up, and the joy they felt when she finished the milk and then settled down into a natural sleep is still remembered after all of these years.

When we were children we took for granted the fact that this story would have a happy ending. And the miracle of surgery that saved her life a few years later — we took that for granted too. But now we appreciate how narrowly we missed not having



Mother . . . and our minds stop right there for we cannot imagine such a thing, not in a thousand worlds. Perhaps even though we're grown we're right back to the days of happy endings again! The picture on this page dates back to 1886 when Mother had just recovered from her critical illness.

How busy Grandmother Field must have been! Martha alone would have kept any mother busy for she was the instigator of many of the stories which we heard in our childhood.

It was Martha, for instance, who refused to be punished. If she were sent upstairs to the spare room to think over her faults she promptly opened the trunks and dressed herself up in all kinds of costumes. Then she paraded back and forth in front of the windows while the other children stood down below and watched admiringly. When supper time came she persuaded them to fill a small bucket with food and raise it up to the windows by a clever pulley system that she had devised. Mother says that she cooperated in this foxy trick more than once, but then Mother would — she could never refuse anyone in trouble and Martha was certainly in trouble if supper time found her in the spare room.

Martha was willing to try anything. When Uncle Sol staged his wild west shows and wanted someone to balance a walnut on his head while he shot it off, Martha was the willing volunteer. Sol shot so accurately that they could never understand why Grandfather Field spoiled everything by putting a stop to it instantly when he discovered what was going on.

It was Martha and Sol who were on such good terms with Grandfather's purebred Jersey bull (he was named Dolliver after the famous Iowa statesman) that when he had to be taken to another farm they offered to get him there. They hitched an old horse to the road cart and started off leading Dolliver behind by the nose. He behaved beautifully until they were almost in sight of their destination and then he stopped and pawed the earth and bellowed loudly and let it be understood that he'd not go another step.

They coaxed and pulled and pleaded. Nothing happened. Then they tried twisting his tail, switching him, scaring him, and putting dirt in his mouth. Still nothing happened. Then in desperation Martha said that she'd

try riding him, so she made a daring leap from a nearby bank. "He'll go like the wind if he starts," she yelled as she made the jump.

She was right. He lunged and started off like a cyclone, and they entered the farm gate at a terrific pace, Martha astride Dolliver and Sol tearing along in the road cart. The people who saw it laughed until they were sick, and for years they teased Martha about the spectacle she made dashing into the farm yard astride a Jersey bull. Was she dismayed? Not in the least.

In fact, nothing dismayed Martha. She was ready for everything and could always *attempt* a solution. One of these attempts came when three or four of them had been hunting ground squirrels in the pasture on a hot July morning. It occurred to them that if they coupled up the windmill they could pump some water to pour down the squirrel holes, but to do that they needed a necessary bolt — and it couldn't be found. After a long search Martha generously suggested that she stick her finger through the holes while the others caught the water that was pumped. It was a fine idea, just



This picture was taken in 1886 shortly after Mother had recovered from her critical illness. Aunt Helen and Aunt Martha are standing; Aunt Jessie is sitting next to Mother.

how fine we found out when we asked Aunt Martha one day why her finger was so crooked!

During the years that Mother was growing up on Sunnyside farm, a good share of the family income came from Grandfather Field's truck garden. He was a wonderful gardener, anything would grow for him, and during the

summer months all of the family pitched in to help him. Aunt Helen often had charge of the berries, and Mother helped her make hundreds and hundreds of boxes for the season's business. There was a large orchard of cherry trees too, and every morning the cherry pickers walked out from town to work at Sunnyside. Mother and Aunt Susan were right up in the trees with the others, and Grandfather used to say that what with their having boy hair-cuts and wearing overalls and being so much help to him, he really had four boys rather than just Uncle Henry and Uncle Sol.

After a busy, busy summer it was almost a let-down to start back to school. All of the Field children went to the Fairview School about a mile west of Sunnyside. Often we took this road on our evening rides, and Mother says that she never drives over it without remembering those long ago days when she trudged along in a neat sleeve apron, her long black braids tied with red ribbon, and a dinner pail in her hand. On the road home at night they generally stopped to fill their empty dinner pails with things that grew along the road, particularly the purple burrs that Grandmother had taught them to make into little baskets for their playhouse.

On one occasion Martha returned home with a really choice collection. She wanted very much to be a doctor and the study of anatomy fascinated her, so one day she decided that she would present a complete skeleton to her anatomy class at school. As luck would have it she knew where a dog had been buried by the side of the road, and every afternoon on her way home from school she dug carefully and smuggled a few bones to the house in her dinner pail.

One evening she was unusually late returning from school and Grandmother called from the living room to find out what had kept her. There were guests from town in the living room, but this didn't stop Martha for a moment. She simply hurried in where everyone was sitting, rattled her dinner bucket gayly, and announced that at last she had the complete skeleton of a dog! The sound of the rattling bones startled the guests considerably, but Grandmother didn't scold her — she knew that a real education is not learned in books and that eager curiosity once squelched is never again quite so compelling.

It was curiosity of a very eager sort indeed that accounted for one of Grandmother's worst surprises. The incident happened shortly after the county fair when all of the children were still excited over the balloon ascension that they had witnessed. It had seemed such a simple matter to get that balloon into the air that they decided to try it themselves when Grandmother had a good fire in the kitchen range.

Their opportunity came when Grandmother entertained several guests from town. She asked them to stay for supper, and consequently had a fire going. She was so busy ente



maintaining her guests and cooking that she didn't see the children climb out of an upstairs window with a flour sack and string, and then crawl cautiously up on the roof without mishap. It was their plan to hold the sack over the chimney until it filled with smoke; then Aunt Susan was to pull the slipnoose that would release it into the sky.

After they had weighted down the edges of the sack with bricks they waited breathlessly for their balloon to ascend. But alas! instead of going up it went down, bricks, sack, and all. They tore off to the orchard at once and sat there feeling very guilty, while Grandmother wondered what in the world had gotten into the stove to make it start belching out clouds of smoke. She had some of her famous biscuits in the oven and her guests had made several comments of anticipation, but there were no biscuits that night. It wasn't until the next day when the stove pipe was taken down that Grandmother learned what had happened, and even then she was at a loss to know how a pile of bricks and an old sack could have gotten into her chimney!

Weekdays were crowded to the brim in summer and in winter, but when Sunday came around the usual activities ceased. Everyone was up early on Sunday morning so that the chores could be gotten through with in good time, and after these were done everyone dressed and went to church and Sunday School at the Congregational church in Shenandoah. Grandmother and Grandfather helped to organize this church and always took a great interest in its activities. The roads had to be absolutely impassable to keep the Fields home from church, and often they ploughed through mud, some of them in a two-seated carriage, and the others following in a single buggy.

Right here I would like to quote for you the blessing that was always asked by Grandfather Field at the table. It is one of the most vivid memories that we have of him, and in our minds it is associated particularly with hot summer noons when we returned from church and Grandfather came to eat Sunday dinner with us. We could hear his cane tapping very briskly far away (even when he was in his eighties he walked swiftly), and then when he reached the house he picked up the baby and played with him until dinner was ready.

When Mother called us we went into the dining room and sat down and waited expectantly. Then Grandfather lowered his white head, folded his hands, and asked this blessing:

"Kind Father, have mercy upon and bless us. Sanctify this food to our use. Watch and guard us. Keep us from harm. Forgive us our sins and save us at last, for Christ's sake. Amen."

We all think that it is the most beautiful blessing we have ever heard, and through these many years we have never heard it without thinking of Grandfather and those long ago days when he was here to ask it at our table.

Grandmother's early interest, fine



Mother was around four years old when this picture was taken. Aunt Helen Fischer is with her. Aunt Helen says that unknown to her parents she slipped into the photographer's studio and had this taken entirely on her own initiative. It was intended for a surprise, and she wasn't disappointed at their amazement when she presented them with the picture.

sewing, was the thing that she truly loved to do. She made every stitch that her five daughters wore, and the plainest garment never looked carelessly made. School dresses for winter were made of dark wool, often turned again and again, but the lovely white collars that were worn on them saved them from feeling like hand-me-downs. Those little collars bore the mark of Grandmother's skill and love for her girls. She always found time to whip on an edging of fine lace, or to embroider some delicate little design in the corner.

I think that Mother must have inherited this particular talent from Grandmother, for she has often said that her favorite hobby was making clothes for Dorothy, Margery, and me. She has told us that she doesn't know how in the world her mother ever found time to take the extra stitches that saved a dress from being commonplace, and in my turn I can say that I don't know how Mother ever found the necessary time. Some of the loveliest things she made for me date back to the years when Donald, Margery and Wayne were all under five, and she had a big house to keep up, and most of the time very little help. I wonder if she knows that I can still see and almost smell the beautiful embroidered wool flowers on a green winter dress that was the joy of my life?

Yes, I'm certain that Grandmother Field's pleasure in sewing for her girls came down to Mother full-fledged.

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When we were little children and Grandfather Field came to spend Christmas Eve with us, he always trotted a grandchild or two on his knees and sang a song that his own children heard many years before on Christmas Eve at Sunnyside Farm. The song goes like this:

"Up on the house, no delay, no pause,  
Clatter the steeds of Santa Claus,  
See what a bundle of sleds and toys,  
Ho! for the little one's Christmas joys.

Chorus—

Oh, Oh, Oh, who wouldn't go?

Oh, Oh, Oh, who wouldn't go?

Up on the housetop, click, click, click,

Down through the chimney with  
good Saint Nick?"

There are many verses in which everyone from baby Jo to old Rover are accounted for, but the first verse alone is enough to call up the whole picture of Christmas Eve with Grandfather Field. He added so much to every holiday that all of his grandchildren vied with each other to have him for the big event, but one year he wasn't with any of us for he was playing the role of Santa Claus in a church program at Redlands, California—and he was then more than eighty years old! No one could have enjoyed Christmas more than he did, probably because he had such deep love for little children.

Christmas Eve meant a church program to the Field family, just as it does to us today. Grandmother Field's gift to her girls was a beautiful new dress, one that she had spent much time and thought in making, and this dress was given to them on Christmas Eve in order that they might all have new dresses for the program. All of the children were expected to take part in this program, and one time as the evening was drawing to a close Grandmother Field heard a stranger behind her say, "Well, they shook the Field tree pretty hard!" He had no idea that he was sitting directly behind Mr. and Mrs. Field, but his chance remark became a family classic that was repeated for years.

After the program Santa Claus arrived (usually Grandfather Field) and distributed gifts, the same gifts that we know today: a mosquito bar sock filled with hard candy and one orange. It was a comfort to have this treat for the long ride home, and I suppose that most of the socks were empty when the horses turned into the driveway at Sunnyside. But there were real socks to hang before everyone piled into bed, and then Christmas morning brought the presents. There wasn't an elaborate assortment of gifts, but there were games, plenty of games. Both Grandmother and Grandfather had learned in their teaching that games can be genuinely educational, so Christmas brought a fresh set of authors, map puzzles that were to be put together, and quiz games of different kinds based on history and geography.

One year there were no presents at all. This state of affairs was caused by Aunt Jessie who was then nine years old. She had been sent to Illinois to spend a year with her Grandmother and Grandfather Eastman, and as the holidays drew near the entire family began to worry about her. What if she grew homesick on Christmas Eve? How much fun could she have, just one little girl with two elderly people? The more they thought about it the more they worried, and finally they decided to take all of the money that had been set aside for Christmas and buy a beautiful doll for Jessie.

It was a beautiful doll, the most



beautiful doll that any of the Field children had ever seen. But it needed clothes before it went traveling to Illinois, so everyone pitched in to make it a wardrobe. Aunt Helen says that she can still see the bright red leather handbag that she made to put over the doll's right arm! When every garment had been finished the doll was carefully packed and shipped to Jessie, and on Christmas morning no one gave a second thought to the fact that there were no presents at Sunnyside because everyone was thinking so hard about what Jessie must be doing and thinking as she found her beautiful doll and all of its clothes.

Another year the most important gift was something that Grandmother Field received. She had long wanted a really good bread pan, one to be used only for the bread to rise in; but cash was short and somehow it never could be stretched far enough to cover the pan. Therefore it was a thrilling moment when Frances Johnson, one of the girls who lived with them for years, took some of the money that she earned teaching school and bought a wonderful pan. When she reads this I imagine that her memory will go back over the years too, and she will see again the Christmas morning at Sunnyside farm when everyone was so excited over the shining bread pan. It was used as a centerpiece on the table for Christmas dinner! In later years Grandmother Field received expensive gifts from all parts of the country and from other countries too, but I doubt if any of them brought a bigger thrill than the bread pan from her thoughtful girl, Frances Johnson.

There were several families of relatives with whom Christmas dinner was shared. Aunt Helen says that she remembers all of the children presenting real programs for the grown-ups on Christmas afternoon, and everyone, from the oldest to the youngest, took part with recitations or songs. Sometimes it was a play that Aunt Helen wrote and rehearsed for several weeks in advance. These plays were taken very seriously, and Aunt Helen even made costumes for the various parts. Those of us who want our children to be able to appear in public without feeling self-conscious should find a lesson in Grandmother and Grandfather Field's insistence that their boys and girls learn to contribute willingly to family, church, and school entertainments.

The picture on this page was taken shortly after Christmas in 1892. We prize it very highly for it is the only one in which all of the family appears. The dignified young man in the back row is Uncle Henry. Next to him are Aunt Martha, Uncle Sol, and Aunt Helen. Mother is standing beside Grandmother Field, Aunt Jessie is sitting in front of the table, and Grandfather is holding Aunt Sue on his lap. It must have been quite a chore to get everyone into the photographer's for this picture, but we have been grateful many times over that the effort was made. Such family portraits are a priceless heritage down through the years.



The Field family in 1892. In the last paragraph of the column at the left is a detailed explanation.

I have always been interested in stories that have come down through the years regarding the various ways in which Grandmother and Grandfather Field managed their children, but now that I have a child of my own to rear I am doubly interested, for out of the past there is much to be learned and used in the future. It wasn't accidental chance that produced their happy home, so I have thought that perhaps all of us with children would be interested in a glimpse behind the scenes at the ideas that they put into practice.

It was the common opinion of the neighbors near Sunnyside Farm that Grandmother and Grandfather didn't "manage" their children — they just grew. I've noticed that this is what people always say about folks who have "luck" with flowers — they overlook the knowledge, planning and work that lie behind the blooming garden. Thus it was that the atmosphere of freedom at Sunnyside led people to believe that Mr. and Mrs. Field simply allowed their children the whole rein, and that miraculously enough they turned out well in spite of it. Little did they suspect the direction that went into the other end of the reins, or that the children turned out well *because* of their freedom, not in spite of it.

There were very few orders and commands given at Sunnyside. No one was driven to work, no one was nagged into doing what had to be done. As soon as each child was old enough to reason he could see for himself what there was to do, and because it was expected that he would pitch in and help at what everyone else was doing, he just naturally did what was taken for granted that he would do. Grandmother and Grandfather both knew that the thing a child wants more than anything else in the world is to feel that he "belongs", and there is nothing that gives him the sense of belonging as completely as sharing in all of the family activity.

During the summer months when Grandfather's truck garden was producing the bulk of the family income everyone worked and worked hard. Old friends have said that if you stopped at the farm during those days you could see a little Field in overalls everywhere you looked weeding away for dear life. Since there were only two boys in the family this meant that the bulk of the little Fields you saw "everyplace you looked" were girls. But when night came and the day's work was over, everyone who had worked together during the day enjoyed themselves together in the evening. Some parents might have gone about their own affairs and left their children to have what fun they could, but Grandmother and Grandfather joined in the pigeon roasts or "barbacues" that finished many a summer day.

While some of the crowd climbed to the cupola of the barn and captured the pigeons, others built the brick stove, made the fire, and foraged for potatoes, apples, eggs, onions, etc. Grandmother brought out a plate of bread and butter and a pitcher of milk, and what a delicious meal it made! After the banquet was over everyone sang songs around the camp fire and often Grandfather, who had an exceptionally beautiful voice, sang songs that he remembered from the Civil war. The memories of these evenings are among the dearest that all of the children have, and in themselves they go far towards explaining why Mr. and Mrs. Field got so much help from their children without driving them. Work together and play together — it's something to remember.

The family money was kept in a "money drawer" to which everyone had free access, yet never once was there so much as a dime unaccountably missing. If something were needed, genuinely needed, one could get the money from the drawer without going into long explanations. It was taken for granted that no one would



take money that *everyone* had worked to make for any individual foolishness. There was an example set for this, of course. Grandfather and Grandmother never spent money foolishly, and because they always lived within their means it was easy for the children to see what was necessity and what was indulgence.

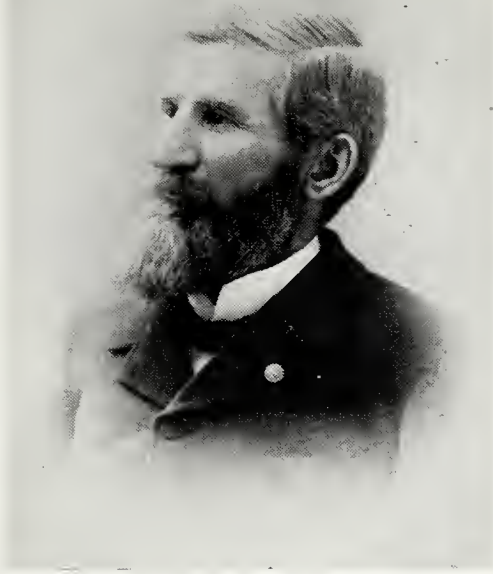
Yet Grandmother, who really managed the household money, could understand a child's desire, and once she let Aunt Helen buy something "foolish" at a time when money was very scarce. This particular piece of foolishness was an imitation moonstone pendant, utterly worthless, of course, but Aunt Helen wanted it desperately and Grandmother understood that it was important to her. Aunt Helen says now that she treasures the memory of that little pendant more than any genuine jewel that could have been given to her in after years, for Grandmother did not make light of her childish passion. There is an element of genius in knowing when something "foolish" is more important than thrift. This is another thing that I must remember.

There was respect for the aged in the Field home. No one said, "Now listen, you must always speak politely to Great Aunt Clara," or "You must do all you can to help Uncle Henry." But how could any child behave rudely if he saw that his parents always spoke and behaved with courtesy to the elderly relatives who were frequently with them for months at a time? Mother says that she can remember hearing Grandmother say that if they had to find fault with each other they should go out of earshot to do it for if Great Aunt Clara or Uncle Henry overheard it they would feel depressed.

There was naughtiness at times, but not disrespect. And there was disobedience at times, but it was the disobedience that comes from quick things on the surface and not from long-smouldering antagonisms and hatreds. For there was no hate in Grandfather's home. Bitter arguments about religion, politics, and money were never heard in that house. Everyone had a right to his own ideas and the only thing expected was that each person should respect the right of the other person to believe what he believed.

The thing that Grandmother and Grandfather really lived by was the belief that each one of their children should develop in his own way. Whatever they truly wished to do was encouraged, and when it came time to choose professions and get the necessary educations, great sacrifices were made to help make it possible. No one was ever forced to turn to this kind of work or that kind of work simply because Grandmother and Grandfather had the idea that it would be a good thing. It's the one certain way of avoiding a square peg in a round hole.

But if all the Field children were given freedom to do what they wished to do, at the same time it was expected that they would actually *do* something and not merely fritter away their time. There were too many im-



Grandfather S. E. Field when he served as a member of the Iowa Legislature in 1889.

portant things to do in this world and not half enough time to get all of them done. This was the reasoning that lay under everything—do what you want to do and feel that you must do, but *do* it. It is understandable, therefore, that no one ever heard of a lazy Field!

But when it's all said and done, perhaps the greatest single reason for Grandmother and Grandfather's "luck" with their family is because they trusted their children completely. When other children were kept constantly under a watchful eye and not permitted to go here or go there, the Field children were allowed to go on trips by themselves and make their own decisions. The trust that was placed in them was never betrayed.

There was not a great deal of illness at Sunnyside, but in 1892 Mother was critically ill and missed death by almost as narrow a margin as when she had had cholera infantum several years earlier. Again her recovery was miraculous, particularly in view of the fact that medical facilities were so limited in those days.

Whooping cough had been going the rounds in the family, and during Mother's siege with it she coughed so hard that she burst a blood vessel in her neck. Within a very short time a large tumor had formed around the jugular vein, and her condition was serious.

Grandmother and Grandfather consulted several doctors, none of whom held out much hope; and finally, in desperation, they decided to put her case in charge of a young doctor who had just come from an eastern medical college and located in Shenandoah.

He said that the only hope was a dangerous operation, and that unless it were performed at once she had no chance at all. Grandmother explained this to Mother and asked her how she felt about the operation, and Mother says that she can remember saying, "Yes, I want it done, for if I do go to heaven I don't want to take this big

lump with me." She had grown so sensitive about her appearance that she hid whenever callers came to the house.

There was no hospital in Shenandoah at that time, of course, so the large dining room at Sunnyside was transformed into a hospital room. The rug was taken up, the curtains removed to admit all light possible, and all of the furniture was carried out except the table.

Aunt Martha's ambition to be a doctor led her to ask if she might act as a surgical nurse, and the doctors were willing for her to help give the ether and to hand them their instruments. She was really badly needed, and to this day one of her most vivid memories is the operation that she assisted with fifty years ago.

The operation was a success, and soon Mother gained back the strength that she had lost. It was a difficult piece of surgery, and today it would be performed only in a large hospital with a battery of surgeons and nurses at hand. But under such primitive conditions the young doctor saved Mother's life, and since it was the first major surgery that he performed after locating in Shenandoah, he always remembered it with pride. Years later he brought Dorothy and Frederick into the world, and until we moved away from Shenandoah in 1917 he took care of our family.

Grandfather Field was such a wonderful nurse that it was almost a temptation to be sick. Surely Aunt Martha inherited from him her capacity to be of great service during illness, for not only did he have a remarkably deft hand in the sick room, but he also kept a sharp eye open for things that would please a sick child. Many were the times that he came into the room with a beautiful rose still shedding morning dew from its petals, or a bunch of pink apple blossoms in the spring, or a twig heavily laden with ruby red cherries.

No request was too extravagant for him to turn down flatly. Once when Aunt Jessie had been ill for a long time with quinsy and had lost every bit of her appetite, she suddenly decided that a roasted humming bird was the one thing in the world that she could eat.

"Roasted humming bird?" Grandfather repeated. "Why of course you can have a roasted humming bird!"

It was a bitter winter morning and Aunt Jessie leaned up on her elbow to watch Grandfather plow through drifts in search of her humming bird. At last he disappeared behind the barn, and then an hour or so later he came into Aunt Jessie's room again with a plate that contained a beautifully roasted humming bird. It looked delicious and it was delicious. Aunt Jessie ate every mouthful, the first food that she had been able to get down in several days, and for a long time she talked about her wonderful roasted humming bird. It wasn't until much later that Grandfather talked about "humming birds that look like snowbirds."

No one around Sunnyside was encouraged to feel sorry for himself. Was a toe badly stubbed? Then wrap



it up and forget it. Was a stomach acting fractious? Then take some soda and remember the next time that green apples can cause a lot of trouble. Grandmother never made a fuss about illness. She suffered severely from headaches, and yet many times her family never knew until evening that she had been struggling with one all day. In the same fashion she made it sound like nothing at all that she had been alone in the house when Aunt Martha was born. Grandfather had gone for the doctor, and so it was up to Grandmother to wrap Aunt Martha in Grandfather's shirt (the only flannel piece within reach) and then wait calmly for the doctor to arrive.

A couple of years later Aunt Martha was responsible for another medical emergency. That was the time Grandmother had been making soft soap, and Aunt Martha amused herself by sitting on an "upside down" wooden tub to watch the proceedings. When nap time came, Grandmother put her to bed and then went back out in the yard, turned over the "upside down" tub and poured warm soap into it.

Well, Aunt Martha decided that she couldn't stand it to stay in bed if it meant missing the end of the soap proceedings, so she climbed out of her crib and went out in the yard to sit down on her tub. Grandmother had just gone around the corner of the house when she heard a frightened little scream, and turned around just in time to see the edge of a white nightgown disappearing into the soft soap. She ran and grabbed out a very soapy little girl, scooped the soap out of her mouth and eyes, and then rushed for the lard can. When the doctor arrived he said that the lard was the only thing that saved her eyes, and when you think of the lye that must have gone into that batch of soap you wonder that even lard turned the trick.

Grandmother respected her children's wishes with as much attention as though they had been adults. She was particularly careful about seeing that they had their own places at the table, for all of them felt strongly about sitting at one particular place. Uncle Henry was the most firm on this subject. He could never abide not eating in his own place, and even after he was married Grandmother set his place at the table for fear he might drop in at meal time and feel badly if he saw someone else occupying his own chair.

Grandmother's table always looked very nice. Not only did she insist on careful dish washing but day in and day out the table was laid with particular care. Woe be to any girl who carelessly put on a cracked plate, a handleless cup, or a cup and saucer that didn't match; and never were there such big ironings that table linen could be given "a lick and a promise." Grandmother took great pride in her table linen, and even with the heavy work and demands of her big family she satisfied her desire for nice things by double-hemstitching a full-size damask cloth all the way around.



This picture isn't too clear, but we wanted to use one that dates unquestionably from horse-and-buggy days! Grandfather and his little granddaughter, Gretchen Fischer, are in the front seat. Aunt Helen and a friend are in the back seat. This surrey with the fringe on top belonged to Grandfather.

But it wasn't the appearance of the table that made all of the children feel so keenly about giving up their places at it. Rather can it be explained by saying that it was in this circle around the big table that everyone felt most keenly the love and protection, the close ties of family. It was then that words of praise were given, plans were discussed, and bits of news were told. Is it any wonder, then, that all of them loved their places at the table and hated to give them up?

As the older children in the Field family finished country school they entered the Shenandoah High School. It was only about a mile and a half from Sunnyside to the school, so they walked it in good weather and never used the horse and buggy except when the roads were bad. As they finished high school they entered the Western Normal College. This was a good sound educational institution that served southwestern Iowa for many years; it was located where the present high school stands and operated successfully until 1916 when the main building was destroyed by fire.

Henry, Helen, Martha and Jessie, were all students at the college. Grandfather paid part of their tuition by furnishing the college kitchen with fruits and vegetables, and during the winter months he took in barrels of sauerkraut and pickles that he had put up for them.

The entire Field family enjoyed the activities that centered around Western Normal College. Several evenings each week Grandfather hitched up the team and drove his family into town to hear debates and contests. Frequently he served as one of the judges for these affairs. Then there were the lyceum courses to attend during the winter months, and since Grandfather always insisted that a family ticket be purchased for all educational features which came to the college, the Fields never missed any of them.

It was at the Western Normal College that Uncle Henry met his first wife, Annie Hawxby of Nemaha, Nebraska, who was also a student at the college. She was a very intelligent and sweet girl, and although they were

both so young (Uncle Henry was only twenty at this time) they decided to be married as soon as the school year was over. Mother says that she can remember vividly how excited she was by this event, partly, I suppose, because the new sister-in-law lived so close. There was a small cottage at Sunnyside and Uncle Henry and Annie moved into it so that he could go on with his business of running a market wagon and selling a few seeds during the winter months.

As anyone can readily imagine, there was a beaten path between the big house at Sunnyside and the little white cottage on the next hill. Grandmother could scarcely keep her girls at home, and when Frank was born he did not want for aunts to take care of him. Mother says that she thinks she spent more time with him than the other girls, for when he had the measles she had to be quarantined with him. He cried for her if she went out of his sight, so for two weeks she did nothing but entertain him—and she says that she enjoyed every minute of it.

Uncle Henry's seed business grew steadily from the very beginning, and every year he added new customers to his lists. It was his ambition to build up a big seed business, and although he didn't dream then how large his business would become, he realized that he would have to get closer to town. Sunnyside was too far from Shenandoah, so the best solution to the problem seemed to be for him to buy the land that has been known for years as Sleepy Hollow.

Grandmother Field owned this land—she purchased it with money that she inherited when her father died. It was an ideal location for Uncle Henry because of its convenience to Shenandoah, and after he bought it from Grandmother he made arrangements to move his small white house from Sunnyside to the new farm. Mother says that she still remembers how much fun she had the day the house was moved. She ran along beside it and climbed in and out of the doors as it was moved to its new location.

Uncle Henry lived at Sleepy Hollow only a brief time before Annie's illness and death. This was the first death in the family since Baby Stephen's death a number of years earlier, and Mother still recalls the sense of shock that everyone felt when Annie's serious condition was discovered. She had a bad case of measles that was followed by rheumatism; this affected her heart, and nothing could be done to save her.

Frank was only five years old at the time of his mother's death. He spent most of this time with Grandmother and Grandfather Field, but every Saturday morning Aunt Susan and Mother took him to Sleepy Hollow while they cleaned up the house. Uncle Henry kept "batch" alone there, and since he was in the field from morning until night he didn't have any spare time to keep the dishes washed. Grandmother had reached the age where her frail health wouldn't permit her to take on any



extra work, so it fell to Mother and Aunt Susan to clean up Uncle Henry's house every Saturday morning.

About this time Grandfather Field decided to move to town. All but three of his children were either in college or high school and there were many trips to town over bad roads and through all kinds of weather. He did not sell or rent the farm for he was not ready to retire, but he and my Uncle Sol drove back and forth during the winter months. During the summer vacation all of the family went back to the farm, for enough furniture had been left there that they could live comfortably, and all could help with the farm work. This schedule of living was carried out for several years as the whole family loved Sunnyside and enjoyed going back each summer.

Frank spent most of his time with Grandfather and Grandmother Field until his father remarried. Then he returned to Sleepy Hollow. Uncle Henry married Edna Thompson who was also a student at Western Normal College. She too was from Nemaha, Nebraska, and had grown up on a farm near the Hawxby's. In fact, she was a close friend of Annie's and had often been a guest in Uncle Henry's home. The grandparents were very happy that Frank could have a stepmother who was not a stranger to him.

Frank had inherited his grandfather's and his father's love for gardening and was very happy as he helped his father in his truck garden, and rode proudly on the seat beside him on the numerous trips to town with loads of vegetables.

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Through the past few pages we have walked through the door at Sunnyside, so to speak, and observed the life that the Field children knew when they were growing up on the farm. Along with the stories that have come down through the years I have tried to give you a glimpse of the philosophy by which Grandmother and Grandfather Field lived, and although it is difficult to sum up so broad a subject in a few words, perhaps it is enough to say that they taught their children to love nature, books and art, to find good in all people, to be honest and thrifty, and to be creative.

What were the results of their beliefs and work? Well, there aren't enough pages to do the subject justice, but because our story breaks away from Sunnyside at this point and follows the members of the family as adults, I think it would be a good idea to stop right here and now and tell you something about the results of Grandmother's and Grandfather's training.

As I mentioned earlier, laziness was abhorred at Sunnyside and it was expected that every child would do *something*. Plans and hopes were never made light of, and encouragement was always forthcoming for the interests that each child found. Possibly a good many of these interests seemed impractical to Grandmother and Grandfather, but they never squelched them and poked fun at



On Grandmother Field's last trip to Shenandoah from California this picture was taken on Aunt Helen Fischer's terrace. Grandfather is with her. Grandmother was in very frail health at this time, and it was only an intense desire to see her children and grandchildren that enabled her to make the trip. She passed away less than a year later.

them. Who could tell what might come out of them? Better a dozen dead-ends than a road not even traveled.

It is quite possible that they were doubtful about Uncle Henry making a living from selling seeds. After all, in those days most people got together their own seeds and the idea of making a business of it was novel, to say the least. Wouldn't it be wiser for him to go on with the teaching profession, since he had already proved himself to be a good teacher? Or perhaps he should be a civil engineer, he had done surveying and liked it. On Grandmother's side of the house there had been ministers and I am sure she must often have thought what a fine minister Uncle Henry would make. Maybe he should settle down to straight farming and be sure of making ends meet. If they thought these things, they didn't say so, but helped him all they could with his plans.

Aunt Helen's life-long interest in gardens began at Sunnyside. It is an interest that has encompassed lecture tours, the writing of magazine articles, the publication of a highly successful book which her daughter Gretchen illustrated beautifully, and a radio program that is nearing its twentieth anniversary. These are achievements, solid achievements, and yet they couldn't possibly have been foreseen by Grandmother and Grandfather when they encouraged the interest that she expressed when she was a young girl. They probably were distressed by the fact that her poor health didn't permit her to attend school regularly along with the other children, but instead of showing their dismay they made her feel that it was a good thing to work with flowers.

Later, when she was well enough to go out on her own, they didn't balk when she decided to go to East Aurora, New York, and learn bookbinding and illustrating in Elbert Hubbard's publishing house. And when she went to Lincoln to attend the University of Nebraska and decided to open a private kindergarten to help pay her expenses, they didn't suggest that she find something more "practical". Kindergartens were rare in

those days and possibly it seemed hazardous to rent a house for that purpose, but it turned into a very successful venture. Mother went to Lincoln to live with Aunt Helen for awhile, and when we were little we loved to hear her tell how she made the rounds every morning and gathered up the children. And we were very impressed when she told us that she went to the governor's mansion every day and picked up his little boy!

All of these experiences that other parents might have discouraged helped to give Aunt Helen the belief in herself that one must have if his work is to be meaningful.

That's what I mean when I say you have to believe in yourself. And nothing in this world can give you a more substantial reason for believing in yourself than having many and varied experiences. Grandmother and Grandfather might have made Aunt Helen feel that working with flowers and shrubs was a *substitute* for something more important that was beyond her strength, but they didn't. And later they might have tried to keep her safely at home because she was never strong and could so easily fall ill far from her family, but they did nothing of the kind. Surely their beliefs and judgments have been fulfilled a thousand times over.

Aunt Martha wanted to be a doctor, you may remember, and although women doctors were virtually unheard of in those days, I'm sure that Grandmother and Grandfather would have bent their energies to help her had she not chosen to marry instead. But although this particular ambition had to be put aside, she has found many other things to develop and enjoy. Her creative abilities didn't turn in the direction of building a business or making a profession of landscape gardening, but in making beautiful things with her hands, and in writing poetry.

Even when we were small we knew that Aunt Martha did the most original and beautiful handwork in the world! We weren't mistaken. I've seen a great many beautiful pieces of handwork since those days, but I've never seen more gorgeous designs and color combinations than Aunt Martha originated. For several years she sold unusual corsages of silk flowers to one of the big department stores in Des Moines, and during that time she could never keep up with the demand. Then when her two sons were grown she wrote a volume of exquisite poetry titled "Mother's Love Songs." Many of you own a copy of it, and all of you who listen to Mother have heard her read from it at various times.

Grandmother Field always had a great place in her heart for young people, particularly for girls. In the days when she was the busiest there was rarely a time that some young girl wasn't turning to her for encouragement and advice; consequently she must have had great gratification from seeing a continuation of her love for young people in Aunt Jessie's work.

Like the other Field girls, Aunt



Jessie helped finance herself through school by working as secretary to the president of Tabor College, and the many prizes that she won in competitive contests of different kinds also helped solve some of the money problems. Like the other Field girls too, she taught school, both in Iowa and in Helena, Montana where Aunt Helen had also taught. It was while she was in Helena that she was called to be superintendent of schools in Page County, her home county.

It was as county superintendent that she had her real opportunity to put into practice the hopes that she had for helping farm boys and girls. She was one of the originators of 4-H clubs, and worked without sparing herself to get the program underway. She helped start Farm Camps too, and I'm sure that many of you who read this will look back on your own days at Farm Camp as one of the high spots of your life.

After her work in Page County had brought her national recognition, she went to New York to serve as National Secretary of the YWCA for small towns and rural communities. She traveled throughout the entire United States in this work, and she accomplished things that people said just plain couldn't be done. When the National Board of the YWCA chose Aunt Jessie they selected the one person who probably knew more than any other woman about the hopes and ambitions of small town and rural girls. And she cared enough about these hopes and ambitions to see that they were achieved. To all young people, regardless of race and creed, Aunt Jessie has always been a genuine friend.

Uncle Sol Field has lived in California for years, and since I was fifteen when I first met him I have not known him as well as my other uncle and aunts. But he is very much like Uncle Henry in his love for growing things, and both of them are like Grandfather Field in his preference for being out-of-doors.

Probably Uncle Sol's greatest enthusiasm has been for horses. This enthusiasm began when he was a boy at Sunnyside and spent many an hour learning to break colts, and to do all of the "wild-west" feats that he had ever heard about. As he grew older he became known as an unsurpassed judge of horses, and after he purchased a ranch in northern California he used his horses for serious business rather than for entertainment. Several years ago he developed a fine string of horses and since then has spent the summer months at Scout camps where he teaches the boys to ride. He knows the mountain country as well as he knows his own ranch, and many are the trips he has made as a guide for hunting parties. On some of these trips he has captured wild animals, and I remember that once when he visited us in Shenandoah he had a mountain lion with him. Uncle Sol also has trained hunting dogs with unusual success, and through his section of the country the tales of his dogs are legends.

What shall I say about Mother?



This picture of the seven Field sisters and brothers was taken at the time of their final complete reunion in August, 1948. From left to right: Susan Conrad, Sol Field, Jessie Shambaugh, Martha Eaton, Helen Fischer, and Henry Field. Seated is Leanna Driftmier.

Through the years you who are her friends have come to know her so well that it is almost like telling you about your next-door neighbor! But perhaps there are new friends who are only now getting acquainted with the family, so for them we will say that it is almost twenty-six years since Mother first began "coming to call" on you every day by means of the radio. None of us quite believe that it's been almost twenty-six years, but that is what the black-and-white facts tell us.

It was Grandmother Field's firm belief that what you are called upon to do, you can do. And certainly this is the precept that Mother has lived by. We know that the first time she talked to you back in 1925 she was—well, she was scared to death! Radio was a new-fangled invention then, and it took a lot of nerve to face that strange microphone. But she was called upon to do it, and so it was done. And so, too, she began writing this magazine when the time came that her radio work alone couldn't cover the vast amount of home-making helps that reached her in your letters. I'm sure that Mother never envisioned herself as a magazine editor back in the days when she was so busy with her growing family, but as Grandmother would say, when she was called upon to do it, she did it.

In our home, Mother's creative ability took a hundred different forms. The old phrase, "She can make something out of nothing," must first have been used for someone just like her! I've never known anyone else who could turn out such a good meal from left-overs, who could make such a lovely dress for a little girl out of hand-me-downs, who could find such satisfactory substitutes for the expensive toys that we couldn't afford

to buy. It has always been an adventure to live with Mother. You never know around what corner will come something unexpected and interesting. The kind of creative ability that it takes to keep life full and worth-while is the kind I'd rather have than any other—if I could have my choice.

Aunt Susan Conrad, the youngest of the seven Field children, has been busy making beautiful things as long as any of us can remember. She taught school for years in California, and then when her three girls were grown and she decided to give up teaching, the work that she had done as a hobby became her full-time career. Pottery is Aunt Susan's great interest, and she has turned out hundreds and hundreds of original and beautiful pieces. Many of you have seen her various exhibitions, and others of you have heard her lectures during the winter months when she travels throughout several states demonstrating the process of making pottery. (As I write this I have on the table a lovely golden-brown bowl filled with oranges; it was a wedding gift from Aunt Susan and through the years I have treasured it, not only because it is beautiful in itself but because it calls up in my mind all of her unusual ability, and the vividness of her personality).

In some respects it is a long, long road from the Sunnyside of forty-odd years ago to the world that we know today. Yet there is one link that holds all of the threads of the pattern together, and successfully defies Time. That link is the living evidence of Grandmother's and Grandfather's belief in the work of their children, and if they know what the years have brought since they left, surely the knowledge gives them happiness.



In the autumn of 1902, Mother entered the Shenandoah high school as a freshman. She intended to go straight through the school year there, but not many months had passed before Aunt Helen asked her to come to Lincoln. She was managing a private kindergarten in a small house that she had rented, and attending afternoon classes at the University. Mother and Aunt Helen lived in part of the house, and it was a busy, busy time for them — in the mornings they conducted their kindergarten, and in the afternoons they went to classes at the University and high school.

Mother was only about fifteen years old at this time, and it was quite an experience for her to live in the city. Every morning she started out on the streetcar to collect the youngsters whose parents wanted them escorted to school. A private kindergarten was almost unheard of in those days, and Aunt Helen made hers a profitable and worthwhile venture. Mother finished her freshman year at the Lincoln high school, and then returned to Shenandoah.

When we were little children and looked at Mother's high school pictures we thought that they were practically prehistoric because of the clothes that looked so strange to our eyes, but we realize now that her school years were not greatly different from our four years in the Shenandoah high school. I know that her geometry and algebra teacher was also our geometry and algebra teacher, and these subjects had been taught so thoroughly that she could always come to our rescue when we were caught with an equation that we couldn't solve, or a triangle that refused to be dissected and then put together again correctly.

Somewhere too in our old box of family pictures is a large group picture of the basketball team that Mother played on. This team was quite successful, although none of us could understand how the girls ever played in those bulky looking costumes. Mother played center, if I remember correctly, and since she was taller than the others she was a real asset to the team.

In the spring of 1905 Mother graduated from high school. Aunt Susan was a junior at this time, and the two girls were the only members of the family left at home. Grandmother and Grandfather were living then in the house that Fischers have occupied for almost forty years, and Grandmother felt so lost with only two children at home that she took some high school teachers to room and board. They weren't a genuine substitute for members of the family, of course, but they did help ease Grandmother's feeling that the house was empty!

After graduation it seemed only natural that Mother should teach school, for not only had Aunt Helen, Aunt Martha, and Aunt Jessie taught school, but Grandmother and Grandfather were teachers before them. It also seemed the natural procedure to teach in the same school where the older girls had started out, so September found Mother in the community



Leanna Field in 1905.

northeast of Shenandoah.

Whenever I think of Mother teaching this first school I have a mental picture of great blizzards that raged for months on end! This is because I used to feel so badly for her when she told us how she walked through deep drifts to school, and then had to carry out ashes and build a fire before the building was warm enough to work in. Probably there weren't a great many mornings like this, but I could never quite visualize the lovely mornings of autumn and spring whenever I thought of those snow drifts.

This first school was nine miles from the small town of Essex, and many Friday afternoons after school Mother walked those nine miles to spend the weekend with Aunt Martha. She was living there with her husband, Harry Eaton. They owned a drug store, and I believe that their eldest son, Bob, was a small baby at that time. Those weekends were a great pleasure for Mother, and sometimes she walked the nine miles through bad weather in order not to miss them.

The second year that Mother taught she had Aunt Susan with her. They lived at the same home, and every morning after breakfast they started off too work, Aunt Susan to walk one mile east to her school, and Mother to walk one mile west to her school. Their wages sound pretty small to us today, \$35.00 per month, but then they paid only \$3.00 weekly for room and board—and at least there weren't a dozen different deductions such as we have now.

The girls had intended to teach through the school year, but when they went home for Thanksgiving vacation they heard news that changed their plans. Grandmother had been in frail health for some time following several attacks of pneumonia, and the doctor feared that if she had another attack it might prove very serious. Winter was coming on again, and everyone was so worried about her health that it was a relief when the doctor prescribed a winter in Cali-

fornia. Yet mingled with the relief was a feeling of loss, for California seemed far, far away in those days, and how could they go without a single child to be near them? Finally, after much discussion, it was decided that Mother and Aunt Susan should accompany them and enter school in California.

This was a thrilling prospect for the girls . . . country school teachers one day, and world travelers—well, *almost* world travelers!—the next day. Back in 1906 it was quite an exciting event for any family in Shenandoah to take such a long trip, and consequently there was a round of farewell parties for the travelers. There were farewell gifts too, with boxes of candy and fruit that were to be opened on the train.

Grandmother had spent one winter in California so she knew just what clothes would be needed. Ready-made dresses were a luxury not to be dreamed of in those days, so this meant that the sewing machine whirled hour after hour while Mother and Aunt Susan put together their traveling outfits, and their "California clothes". People wore so much more clothing in 1906 that the luggage alone was a big problem, for in addition to the trunks, suitcases, and hat boxes there were all kinds of lunch boxes. Mother doesn't remember how long it took to get everything together, but she still recalls that when they were actually ready to start it took the town dray, a two-seated carriage, and a single buggy to get everyone and everything to the railroad station!

I cannot help but contrast this departure with the departures I've made from Shenandoah for California. Once I left on less than an hour's notice, and in December of 1941 when Russell, Dorothy and I started out, we had a leisurely breakfast in the kitchen, and then stuffed our suitcases in the car and left; I don't think that it took us more than a couple of hours to get everything collected, packed, and placed in the car. Mother says that whenever she sees any of us leave so casually she has vivid memories of their departure for that first trip to California.

Many years have passed since the morning Grandmother and Grandfather Field, and Aunt Susan and Mother got on the train in Shenandoah to start the long trip to California, but Mother says that even yet she cannot see a train leave any station without remembering the thrills of that first long trip. It was a thrill, the kind of a thrill that comes once in a life time, to eat the first meal on the diner, and to go to bed on the train for the first time.

Grandfather had planned the trip so that his family would pass through the most beautiful part of the country during the daylight hours, and he had also arranged for a stop-over in Salt Lake City to allow them to visit the Mormon Tabernacle. Probably this visit had more significance for the Fields than for other people who were traveling on their train, for the Mormons had spent part of a winter not far from Sunnyside on their long trek westward.



Every bit of the trip was so pleasant that no one was wildly eager to see it end; many times during those days Grandmother Field must have contrasted the comforts of their traveling with the experiences that her father must have known when he had gone over much that same route in a covered wagon enroute to the Gold Rush Country. In a few days they had covered country that it had taken him months to cross.

The family reached the end of the trip when their train came down through the last mountain pass into San Bernardino, a town that lies some fifty miles or so north of Los Angeles. It was the first glimpse that Mother and Aunt Susan had ever had of orange trees heavy with their golden fruit, of pepper trees laden with red berries, and of palm trees and cacti. They could hardly believe their eyes, and this is true of any native middle-westerner who sees the tropical foliage of California for the first time. When we were little children, Mother described for us countless times just exactly how these things looked to her when she saw them that morning, but none of us could really visualize it until we saw it with our own eyes.

The first month was spent visiting relatives of Grandmother's in San Bernardino. Then the family went to Los Angeles and took an apartment in the same house where neighbors of theirs in Shenandoah were spending the winter. Aunt Susan and Mother entered the Los Angeles State Normal School at once, and in no time at all they had swung into the routine of attending college in a large city. Aunt Susan took up primary education, while Mother spent most of her time in the manual training department. This explains why she was always such a good "fixer" around the house, for in that department she learned to make six different kinds of joints, to saw lumber, and to handle a hammer as efficiently as any of the men students.

While the girls were gone all day Grandmother worked around the house or visited with her new neighbors on a sunny porch. A little "sitting" went a long way with Grandfather Field, so he made a different excursion almost every day, sometimes to the beautiful city parks where he could look at flowers and trees that were strange to him, and sometimes to small towns in the surrounding country. He didn't say exactly what he had in mind, but he was so much the farmer and so little the city man that his family wasn't surprised when he returned home one evening and announced that he had purchased a small ranch at Highland, a prosperous little town in the shadow of the San Bernardino Mountains.

On the following Sunday Grandmother and the girls went out to look at his ranch. They were accustomed to the many acres of Sunnyside, so probably the three acres that made up this new property of Grandfather's looked small to their eyes. But the place had many kinds of fruit trees already bearing, and Grandfather said that he intended to raise every kind



Grandfather Field under the big walnut tree at "Walnut Park". I believe that is Mother sitting on the porch.

of fruit and vegetable that grows in Southern California. Knowing him as well as they did they realized that he'd manage to do exactly what he planned with those three acres.

In a short time Grandmother, Grandfather and Mother moved out to this new home; Aunt Susan remained in Los Angeles to continue her college activities. Their first big job was to remodel the two-room California ranch house into a modern rustic bungalow, and here Mother's work in the manual training department came in good stead for there were many things she could do after the workmen left at night. She helped to build the beautiful cobblestone fireplace, and made many trips up into the canyons to gather the unusual rocks that were used to enclose the big new cement porches. When they were through they had a lovely modern home that was shaded by huge English walnut trees, and it was the trees, of course, that gave the new home its name—Walnut Park.

There is a little family joke connected with these walnut trees that I think I should tell you about. English walnut meats were still such a treat that Mother felt dissatisfied with the small bucket of nuts that Grandfather brought in every morning. Those trees were heavy with nuts and Mother was sure that one gentle shake would bring down a great quantity of them—but Grandfather refused to let anyone give the trees that gentle shake. One night Mother stole out and nudged the trees just the least little bit with exactly the results that she had hoped for. In the morning Grandfather went out with his quart bucket to pick up the usual few nuts, but he returned shortly to exclaim in astonishment that there were two or three bushels on the ground. He couldn't understand it for he hadn't recalled hearing a heavy wind in the night—but there were the nuts!

The family hadn't been settled at Walnut Park many months when Frank Field came to visit them. He was about twelve years old at this time, and he had grown so lonesome for his grandparents that his father

bought him his first long-pants suit and a railroad ticket and let him start out west. Everyone was happy to have Frank with them again, and he was a great help to Grandfather Field. Grandfather was then seventy-four and he had really undertaken more farming than a man of his age should attempt. Frank took a big load from his shoulders for he took care of the cow, ran the milk route before school in the morning, and helped in the garden. Then on Saturday he and Mother often went up into the canyons and foothills on trips of exploration.

One of these trips took place on Sunday rather than on Saturday, however, and Frank went alone. This came about because he had rebelled at dressing up and going to Sunday School, (it sounds like a twelve-year old boy, doesn't it!) and when Grandfather insisted, he announced that he was going up into the mountains to stay until his father could send him money to return to Iowa. The family decided that the best way to handle the problem was to act as if his plans were fine, so they helped him get ready. Mother packed him a box of food, and Uncle Sol, who was visiting there at that time, loaded the old mountain burro with blankets and cooking utensils.

By the time everything was ready Frank would have preferred dressing and going to Sunday School, but he bravely headed the burro toward the foothills and was soon out of sight. He was gone all day, but just before dark he came bursting into the house with his arms full of Mountain Holly and said, "Look, Aunt Leanna, I went clear to the other side of the mountain to get this holly for you!"

That was the last time there was trouble about Sunday School!

During the first winter that Mother lived at their ranch home, Walnut Park, she spent several weeks working in an orange packing house. It was the custom for the young people of the community to help pack the orange crop for shipment, so Mother joined the friends she had made when they went to work during the busy season. It was the first money that she earned in California.

After the orange season was over Mother got ready to make her first trip back to Iowa. Aunt Jessie was then County Superintendent of Schools in Page County with her office in Clarinda, and she needed extra help during the summer months. Thus it was arranged that Mother should return to help her until September. Not only was it nice to be able to make some money that would be applied to college expenses in the fall, but also gave her an opportunity to visit with relatives and old friends. Shenandoah still seemed more genuine home than California.

September found her back in California again preparing to enter the Los Angeles State Normal College. Aunt Susan had graduated from there in the spring and was teaching a short distance from home, and now was Mother's turn to start the two years' course that was required at



preparation for teaching in California.

Mother has said that it was something of a handicap to follow in Aunt Susan's footsteps because she had been a thoroughly outstanding student, and had left a wonderful record for other members of the family to live up to. The first few weeks she could never turn around without hearing someone say: "Leanna Field? Oh, are you a sister of Susan Field who graduated last year?" And upon learning that this was exactly the case, they immediately signed her up for all of the activities in which Aunt Susan had participated. I've heard Mother say mildly that it was a "difficult situation!"

The thing that made it difficult was the fact that Mother was working so hard outside of school. As I said in an earlier chapter, the Field girls helped meet as many of their own expenses as they possibly could, and it was understood that as one finished she would lend a helping hand to the next in line. In this case, it was Aunt Susan who lent a helping hand with tuition and clothes, while the expense of room and board was met by Mother herself.

She found a home in which she could work for her room, breakfast and supper, and the noon meal was taken care of by working in the college kitchen. The weekends were so busy that she could rarely get home to see the family, for on Saturday she cleaned house, did a big washing and ironing, and all of the "odd jobs" that had been saved for her attention by the people where she lived. Then on Sunday she rehearsed and sang with a quartette in one of the large Los Angeles churches. And of course there was Sunday dinner to get at the house where she lived, and all of the cleaning up afterwards.

This was a heavy schedule for any young girl, and the last straw was piled on the camel's back on a never-to-be-forgotten Saturday morning. Mother was out on the back porch washing by the good old back-breaking rub-it-on-the-board method, and the bad part about this washing was the fact that she never seemed to get anywhere near the end of it for someone in an upstairs window kept throwing down piles of sheets, towels, pillow cases, petticoats with countless ruffles, and everything else in the line of laundry. These objects kept cascading down until Mother was standing knee-deep, literally, in piles of dirty clothes, and she says that she had just made up her mind to stop rubbing and have a good cry when she looked up and saw Aunt Susan coming around the corner of the house.

Well, that was the last Saturday washing Mother did under those circumstances, to put it briefly. Aunt Susan helped her finish it, and then she insisted on packing Mother's belongings and taking them over to another house where a room was available with light housekeeping privileges. Mother lived there for the rest of her college work in Los Angeles.

One day when she returned home from her classes she found a letter



This is Solsuanna, the last rural property Grandfather owned before he retired.

from Grandmother with the news that she and Grandfather had sold "Walnut Park" and were purchasing an orange ranch in the foothills of the San Bernardino mountains. At approximately the same time they sold their home in Shenandoah to Aunt Helen and Uncle Fred Fischer—members of the family have lived in that house now for almost sixty years.

As soon as the college closed in the early summer, Mother went to the new ranch, and she was delighted with it. The house was an attractive California-style bungalow, and it was surrounded by orchards of lemon and orange trees. The place had been built and extensively developed by wealthy people from Seattle, and they had lived on it only a short time when they decided that country life wasn't what they wanted after all, so they sold it to Grandfather Field, and packed their suitcases and left.

When Grandmother Field moved in to the new house she found that the phrase "completely furnished" wasn't an understatement. There was flour in the flour bin, sugar in the sugar bowls, magazines lying on the living room table, and a considerable stock of canned fruits in the pantry. Evidently the Seattle people were eager to be on their road back north, but their loss was certainly the Field's gain for every member of the family loved the place.

They named the new ranch "Solsuanna" for the three children who were in California—Uncle Sol, Aunt Susan, and Mother. Uncle Sol, who was now married, had come to live on the ranch and do the heavy orchard work for Grandfather. While he took care of the groves, Grandfather landscaped and beautified the grounds. He had magnificent calla lilies, large beds of English violets, and an unusually fine rose garden. In a section

where handsome flowers are taken for granted, his varieties always called forth comment from people in the community.

During that first summer on the ranch they had other members of the family with them. Aunt Helen came out from Shenandoah with her two daughters, Gretchen and Mary, and later in the summer Uncle Fred came out to return home with them. It was a happy summer filled with trips to the mountains, visits to the Arrowhead Hot Springs that were only a few miles away, and tramps up to the rocky canyons to fish. There were also long walks over the desert in search of new cacti and curious rocks, and Frank generally came home with his pockets full of lizards and horn toads. Little did

any of them suspect when they passed the big reservoir up in the foothills that during the coming winter it would break and wash away everything on the ranch but the house itself.

This huge cement reservoir, one capable of holding a million gallons of water, was located at the highest point of the ranch in the foothills. It was substantially built, of course, but California rains can be extremely heavy and never a winter passes without a number of dams and reservoirs giving 'way. That was what happened to Grandfather's reservoir. A severe storm sent torrents of water down through the foothills, and when the reservoir overflowed it washed out the big retaining wall. All of the members of the family were awakened by a heavy roar, and they knew instantly that the reservoir had given 'way. In only a few minutes the beautiful gardens were washed out, and the flower beds, wood piles, vegetable gardens, and chickens were gone. Grandfather's valuable orange trees, each one worth \$30.00, were uprooted, and the entire ranch was covered with large stones and debris.

At one corner of the reservoir was a beautiful group of poplar trees, and under them my Uncle Sol had a tent where he and his wife slept on hot nights. They were there the night the wall washed out, but luckily they escaped without being hurt.

Grandfather was seventy-four years old and he had spent a great deal of energy improving Solsuanna. It would have been understandable if he had decided that night to give up the place, sell it for what he could realize from it, and move into Redlands. But apparently it never crossed his mind to give up, for he spent the rest of that night figuring exactly what should be done when morning came—



and when morning came he was out hiring teams and wagons to come and clean up the place. Repairs on the reservoir were started at once, and before three days had passed Grandfather had begun once again to develop his beautiful gardens.

There might have been serious trouble when neighboring ranchers called to learn what he expected to do about the damage that had been done to their property by the flood waters. At first they demanded an outlandish cash settlement, but after they had talked with Grandfather and realized his willingness to do the right thing, they reconsidered their demands and went away as good neighbors rather than as enemies.

After the ranch had been rehabilitated and was once again in good shape, Grandfather and Grandmother decided that the time had come when they needed to retire. Growing and marketing oranges is a big job, and Grandfather had reached the age where it proved too much for his strength. Consequently they sold Sol-suanna and purchased a home in Redlands, a beautiful, quiet town not far from San Bernardino. Possibly a good many of you visited Redlands in pre-war days, for it has long been a favorite spot for winter tourists. The new home was not far from the public library, and in the beautiful park that surrounded it Grandfather spent many happy hours visiting with other Civil War veterans.

In the autumn of 1911 Mother taught her first school in California, a little one-room school in the outskirts of San Bernardino. She lived at home and went back and forth on the street car that made the trip hourly between Redlands and San Bernardino. Probably Mother has long since forgotten something that she told us once about her trip back and forth to school, but I have never been able to forget it.

She said that in the winter when she stayed after school to finish up her work it was dark when she left to catch her streetcar. She had to walk through a lonely orange grove to pick up the car, and because of this she always took a big hatpin out of her hat and held it in her hand so that if anyone bothered her she could defend herself! This made a great impression on me, and I was never able to look at a hatpin after hearing this without thinking of Mother walking through a lonely orange grove at night!

About half of the pupils in her school were Mexicans, little black-haired, brown-eyed children. She has told us that they were very quiet and obedient, and that they never caused any difficulty. Probably this is because they were taught at home to respect the teacher and the priest. A Mexican cemetery was not far from this school, and on the sixteenth of



Mother and her school children when she taught near San Bernardino, Calif.

September, a great Mexican holiday, all of her pupils brought food to place upon the graves of their loved ones. This is a national tradition among Mexicans, but since it was the first time Mother had ever heard about it she was surprised to see bowls of chicken and rice and tortillas on the graves.

After one year in the small San Bernardino school Mother was elected to teach the fifth grade in the Kingsbury public school in Redlands. This was a happy year, for a number of the girls who had graduated in her class at the Los Angeles Normal College were also teaching there. They enjoyed working together, and seeing each other for little social get-togethers in the evenings and over the week-end. The Kingsbury building was only a few blocks from Grandmother and Grandfather's home, so this saved the long streetcar ride morning and night.

One custom in the Redlands schools was interesting. Every spring when the deserts were carpeted with wild flowers, school was dismissed for a day while the students and teachers went flower hunting. It was fun to have the holiday and to see the brilliant desert flowers that bloom so short a time, and there was the added incentive of seeing which room could gather the widest variety of blossoms and win the prize. I don't know if this custom is still carried on or not, but I hope that it is for Mother said that it was always an extremely happy day.

In the summer of 1912 Mother returned to Iowa to help Aunt Jessie Shambaugh with her Farm Camp that was held at the Clarinda Chatauqua grounds during the month of August. It seemed to be just an ordinary trip, but here the story takes a new turn for it was during this month that she met Dad and that I have this story to write.

Mother was twenty-six at this time, and although a good many of her friends had already married she hadn't given the matter much thought. Grandmother Field was thirty when she married, and in a way this rather established the feeling that there was no hurry for her girls to marry in

their late 'teens or early twenties.

Yes, Mother had been so busy and happy in her college work and later in her teaching, that she did not think seriously of being married. Probably she didn't even regard Dad seriously, at first, but he was a good friend of Aunt Helen and Uncle Fred Fischer, and since Mother was visiting in their home she naturally saw a good bit of him.

Mother says that Aunt Helen came very close to playing the role of a match-maker in the situation! She once asked if she didn't think that Dad was very nice, and she pointed out the fact that it would be nice to have a

ready-made family. Howard and I had been living with Grandfather Driftmier and our aunts since our Mother's death, and we were the ones to whom she referred when she mentioned a ready-made family. Mother listened politely to Aunt Helen, but when she returned to California in September she thought that she was going back heart-whole and fancy free.

There were many letters written during the fall and early winter, and when Christmas rolled around she was wearing an engagement ring on her finger, and plans had been made for a June wedding. It must have been around this time that a picture was taken which we used to think was just about the most romantic photograph that we had ever seen in our lives. In this picture Mother was sitting at her dressing table, and Dad's picture was standing on it, and the entire thing was a reflection in the mirror of the dressing table. My, when we used to ask her about the photograph it seemed downright thrilling to us that Dad's picture should have been on that dressing table far away in California!

During that winter Grandfather Field had a large chest made for Mother, and all of her linens and the many gifts that she received at various showers and parties were kept in it. Later it was shipped to Shenandoah, and all through these years it has been in our home. As long as I can remember we have kept extra bedding in it, and although it is a huge thing and takes up a lot of room, I don't imagine that we will ever part with it. Last year Margery thought that it needed sprucing up and consequently it is now covered with a rose quilted top, but underneath it is the same old chest that was shipped back from California almost thirty-two years ago.

In June Mother returned to Iowa to be married. She has said that she left her home that day with such mingled feelings that she couldn't decide if she were glad or sad.. Grandmother and Grandfather Field could not go with her and it was hard for them to see her leave for she had been with them more closely than any





These are the photographs that Mother and Dad exchanged shortly before they were married.

of the other children. She *wanted* to return and marry Dad, but it was painful to wave goodbye to her parents and to know that Grandmother was keeping a brave face only until she had disappeared from sight. It helped that Aunt Jessie, who had been in California for a short time, was returning to Iowa with her—that is, it helped Mother although Grandmother must have felt doubly bereft to have both girls leave at the same time.

When the train reached Fremont, Nebraska, Dad was there and boarded it. He and Uncle Fred Fischer had driven to Omaha together, and Uncle Fred waited there while Dad went on to Fremont—he couldn't wait for the train to reach Omaha! (This was another detail that we always thought was romantic. You know how children are—Mother and Dad are just Mother and Dad, and it is hard to imagine these two people getting on trains to meet each other just like they do in the movies!)

Uncle Fred met them in Omaha and they drove back to Shenandoah to visit with Fischers until their marriage ceremony was performed. There aren't many brides who can step directly into a house that has been made completely ready for them, but that was the good fortune Mother had.

During the last month while Dad was waiting for her to return from California he rented a house directly across the street from Fischers, and fixed it all up from top to bottom. In fact, he did such a thorough job that the only things left for Mother to buy were a waffle iron and a vacuum cleaner. Dad wanted another bookcase too, so they went down town and bought these things together on the day of the wedding.

The ceremony was performed at twelve o'clock on June 25th, 1913. It was a very quiet wedding, not only because Mother preferred it this way since Grandmother and Grandfather could not be there, but also because Mother and Dad are both very prac-

tical people who have never enjoyed fancy affairs. Only the immediate members of the family were present, and after the ceremony had been read a dinner was served to the guests.

This wedding dinner is the only vivid memory that I have of the event. I was only three, but I still remember sitting at a table on the back porch with all of the other children who were present, and how much commotion there was because we all spilled food and water and otherwise made quite a mess. Come to think of it, there must have been about eight or ten of us at the table, so it's no wonder that there was considerable confusion.

Among the papers that I have here on my desk is a clipping, now somewhat ragged and yellow, from the Shenandoah paper of June 27th, 1913. Perhaps you would enjoy reading it too, so I will include it at this point.

"Martin H. Driftmier and Miss Leanna Field were married Wednesday at noon at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. Frederick Fischer. Just the relatives were present, twenty-six in all. Henry Field and Mrs. Fischer had stripped their gardens to decorate the house, using daisies and "blue flowers", the flower of happiness. The ceremony was performed by Rev. W. J. Turner, pastor of the Congregational church. A bountiful dinner was served by Mary Tyner, and then the guests were invited across the street to inspect the new home which had been put in readiness by Mr. Driftmier. The bride, formerly a popular Shenandoah girl, and graduate of the Shenandoah high school, has lived in California the past seven years, having moved there with her parents, Honorable Solomon E. Field and Mrs. Field. Mr. Driftmier is manager of the Mutual Telephone Company, and at this busy season of the year could not be spared long enough to go to California and back, so Miss Leanna returned with Miss Jessie Field who has been on a trip to the coast. After the bride's sister, Mrs. H. E. Eaton

(Martha) is well settled in her new home in Des Moines, Mr. and Mrs. Driftmier expect to visit there, but for the present will make no trip."

Wedding pictures were taken in the afternoon, and then everyone went across the street to see the new home. About six o'clock the guests left, and then Mother prepared supper, the first meal in her own kitchen. Yet in many respects it wasn't the conventional first meal, for in this instance it wasn't just the bride and groom who sat down to eat it. Instead there were five at the table, Mother and Dad, and Aunt Anna Driftmier and Howard and I.

Mother had asked Aunt Anna to come and stay with us until Howard and I were accustomed to our new home. I have been told that the first few days we continued to go to her when we needed our clothes buttoned or attention of any kind, but one evening after a week had passed Aunt Anna went to Mother with tears in her eyes and said that she was no longer needed. She said that they were tears of both joy and sadness, joy because we were going to Mother as to our own Mother, and sadness because it was a wrench to her to give us up. It is only since I have had a child of my own that I can appreciate what this meant to her. She had us as her own children for more than two years, and I understand now what she felt when she said that it took her a long, long time to get over the feeling that the house was empty and lonely.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the pleasant things about writing a family story is the opportunity to back-track, so to speak, and cover incidents that would be difficult to fit into a formal account of people and the things that happened to them. This way I can take my time in putting down details that we children want to be sure to remember, for to us this family story is the best link that we can have with the past—and time is moving swiftly even as I



write this story, so it is a link with the present and with the future, as well. Consequently I want to go back now and write about some of Dad's experiences in years gone by when he didn't suspect that the future would bring a time when his seven children would be interested in these experiences.

Dad was born October 7, 1881, on a farm four-and-a-half miles northwest of Clarinda, Iowa. His father and mother had moved to this farm after their marriage the previous year, and the bulk of the land was raw prairie. I know that when we were small children and drove past this place on our Sunday afternoon drives it was hard for us to realize that most of the land had never been touched until Grandfather Driftmier plowed it for the first time. In the same way we could never visualize his description of Clarinda as it looked when he moved there at the age of five with his parents, and his sister Anna and brother Harry.

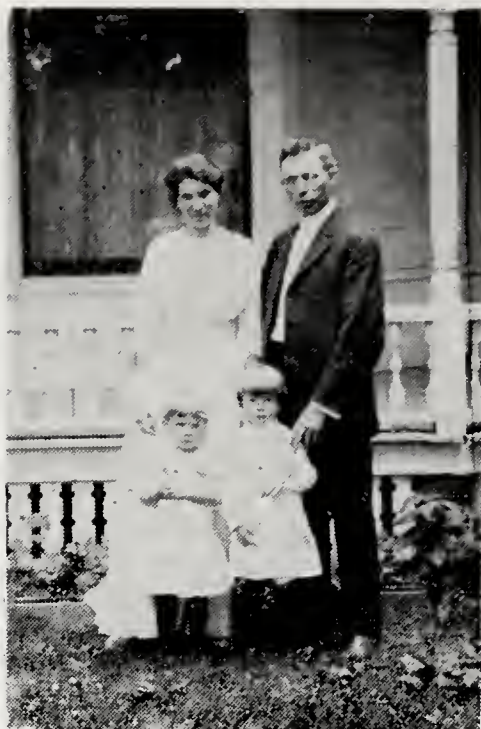
Around 1890 Grandfather moved his family to the house on East Tarkio street that we think of as the family home, since it has been occupied now by the Driftmiers for over fifty years. Directly across the street lived Uncle Joe Driftmier and his family of five children, and there was an unusually close bond between the two families for Uncle Joe and Grandfather were brothers, and Aunt Hannah and Grandmother were sisters. This meant that the twelve children (Uncle Joe's five and Grandfather's seven) were more like brothers and sisters than cousins, and double-cousins, at that.

With such a crowd there was almost no end to the good times that could be stirred up. One particularly successful game invented by Dad and called "Busy Clerk", was the mainstay for a number of years. This game really revealed Dad's early interest in business, for he fixed up an impressive amount of make-shift goods and kept his clerks hopping, although he was the busiest clerk of all. Even now, years later, members of the family laugh when they recall the feeling and energy that they poured into this game.

Thanksgiving and Christmas were the high points of the year, and most of them were spent at their Grandmother's home in the country northeast of Clarinda. Uncle Joe and Grandfather hired livery hacks or bob-sleds, depending upon the weather, and an early start was made for the five-mile trip.

The Christmas customs that we have always carried out in our home were the customs that Grandmother and Grandfather Driftmier started in their home. Grandmother always made big platters of decorated cookies (to this day we children still look for the special kind of silver candy balls that call back such vivid memories to Dad), and because there was so little money for gifts and decorations she invented all kinds of substitutes that would give her children pleasure.

Dad left school at the end of the eighth grade. This, I think, is the one step he has made in his life that



Mother and Dad had a number of conventional photographs taken on their wedding day, June 25, 1913, but late in the afternoon Uncle Henry Field asked them to pose in front of their new home with Howard and Lucile so that he could get this picture.

he has never been able to feel philosophical about. He has always deeply regretted the fact that he didn't have a good formal education (not one of us has ever met anyone who did a better job of educating himself!), but back in those days it didn't seem important, and what *did* seem important was the fact that his family needed his help.

Now most boys of fourteen or fifteen wouldn't be too greatly concerned over such a situation; as a rule, that sense of responsibility doesn't come until much, much later. But the one outstanding characteristic of Dad's personality throughout his entire life has been his sense of responsibility, (there has never been a time and there will never be a time when he will refuse help that lies within his power to give), and so as a young boy going out to his first job it never occurred to him to do anything but turn over his entire wages to his mother.

He did a little bit of everything in the next few years. He worked as a farm-hand for several farm owners northwest of Clarinda. He worked for A. A. Berry, a pioneer seedsman in Clarinda, and after a ten-hour day of the hardest kind of physical labor he went home at night and studied books on merchandising and advertising. He worked as a carpenter too, and made the standard wage of 50¢ a day, a far cry from the present when a carpenter makes more than that in a half-hour. When we were children we liked to have him point out the barns and houses on which he had worked. And there was an interval when he sold and installed light-nig rods.

Probably the first job he had that gave him any real sense of accomplishment was working in an implement store. This gave him an oppor-

tunity to sell machinery, to observe how business was managed, and he made the most of it. He was working in this store when Grandmother Driftmier died in 1900. Her death came only a short time after she returned to Clarinda from a stay in New Mexico where Grandfather had taken her in the hope that a change of climate and altitude would arrest her illness.

Dad was nineteen when his mother died, and his sister Anna was seventeen. Together they managed the home, for Grandfather's work as a traveling salesman kept him out of town for weeks at a time. It helped to have Uncle Joe Driftmier and Aunt Hannah across the street, but the big problem of keeping the family together fell upon Dad and Aunt Anna.

In the spring of 1901 something happened that both directly and indirectly changed the course of Dad's life. He contracted typhoid fever at that time and was seriously ill for a number of weeks. Recovery from typhoid is one of the slowest things in the world, and during the long days that he was trying to get back his strength he turned over in his mind the feasibility of going to Oklahoma. It had just been opened for settlement and the land boom was on in earnest. Everyone was talking about the wonderful new opportunities in Oklahoma Territory, and Dad decided that perhaps there he would find something more to his liking.

He had no business going, of course, for he was still miserably weak and unable to work more than a half-day, but he was so eager to get ahead that he left Clarinda in the autumn of 1901 and went to Oklahoma City. It was then a town of about eight-thousand without a paved street or a sewer — no one had even dreamed about the great resources of oil that were to be tapped later. It was a boom town and there was plenty of work for anyone able or willing to lift his hand, so Dad went to work as a carpenter. He wasn't strong enough to put in a full day's work, but somehow he managed to make enough to live on.

When Dad started working on the Choctaw and Gulf Railroad he learned that the pay train had just been through and that it would be a month before checks were delivered again. He had saved enough money to live on for three weeks, but the beginning of the last week found him with only 65¢. He left the rooming house where he had been staying and made arrangements with the station agent to sleep on the floor of his office under the ticket counter. With the 65¢ he bought sandwiches and coffee, and of course this was only enough to keep him going and not enough to satisfy his hunger.

All of the men were anxious to see the pay train arrive, but no one was more anxious than Dad. From that time on he always managed to have enough money on hand to eat and take care of himself, and as he says now, it was one of the best lessons that he ever learned.

After a few months in Shawnee his health broke down completely from



the strain of overworking after typhoid, and he was very ill, alone in his rooming house without anyone to look after him. When he was able to walk he got to the railroad station and took a train back to Clarinda. Aunt Anna looked after him once he was at home again, and finally he recovered sufficiently to go back to work. In these days when typhoid is almost a vanished disease of the past it is hard to realize that a person's health could be undermined by it for years. Dad was a man in his late twenties before he fully recovered from that illness.

About the time that Dad was ready to go back to work the first farm telephones were being installed around Clarinda. He was interested in this business venture for he could see that it was a coming industry, so on his own he learned as much as possible about this new invention. Then he got a job with the telephone company and helped to install the first farm telephone line in Clarinda.

The business grew and in a year or two he was manager of the Farmers' Mutual Telephone Company in Clarinda. He served in that capacity for two years, and was then called to Shenandoah to manage its telephone plant. The problems that confronted him when he first went there are almost folklore in our family, and whenever any of us are right up against something that we don't know how we're going to manage we think about Dad and his sensations when he faced the seemingly hopeless jumble of that telephone plant.

Well, somehow he managed to get it into operation, and he kept it running smoothly for several years. During this time he saved money for his own future home. Incidentally, he purchased two things during this period that can almost stand as symbols of what he always wanted: an expensive set of encyclopedias, and a violin. He craved good books and good music. They came before the things that most young men of his age found important and necessary.

In May, 1907, Dad was married to Rossie Howard, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Howard. She had been born and reared in Shenandoah, and as a young woman she worked in the telephone company. Dad met her when he went to the telephone company as manager, and after two years of friendship they were married. They lived in Shenandoah for a while and then moved to Fremont, Nebraska. Howard, their first child, was born there on March 20th, 1909.

When he was only a few months old, Dad was transferred to Fort Madison, Iowa. I was born there on May 3rd, 1910. That fall we moved to Waterloo where he was a traveling auditor for the Corn Belt Telephone Company, an organization that operated a number of telephone plants and toll lines in that section of Iowa. It was a good business move, and for the first time Dad felt settled enough to buy a home. He purchased a new house, one that had just been completed, and moved his family into it with the expectation of remaining there for a long time. But things



Dad and his sister Anna in 1892.

weren't to turn out this way. Within only a couple of months Mother became seriously ill with a disease that could not be diagnosed. Specialists were called from Chicago, yet they could do nothing to help her; and in May, just six months after they had moved into their new home, she died.

Dad was confronted with a tragically serious situation. What could be done with these two little children, one twenty-six months old, and one only a year old? Our Grandfather and Grandmother Howard were too old to take the responsibility for both of us, other relatives could manage one baby, but not two. Dad was determined to keep us together at any cost, and so the logical place for us was in our Grandfather Driftmier's home where our four young Aunts could care for us. Aunt Anna had gone to Waterloo to be with Dad when our Mother died, and she was the one who packed our things and traveled with us to Clarinda.

Dad had no heart for remaining in the house or the town where he had known such sorrow. After our Mother's funeral he returned to Waterloo, resigned his position, and sold the house. Then he returned to Shenandoah and again took charge of the telephone plant. Every weekend he went by train to Clarinda to spend Sunday with Howard and me, and I can remember hearing Aunt Anna say what special pains she took to be sure that Howard and I were spick-and-span for his visit.

As I've said before, when we are young we don't understand the things that we take for granted, and it is only when we are grown and have children of our own that we can realize what situations really mean. For years I simply took for granted the fact that our Aunts cared for us after our Mother's death, and yet now I appreciate what this meant. Aunt Anna, on whom most of the responsibility rested, was a busy young teacher putting in a full day's work at school and managing the house as

well. Grandfather was there, Aunt Erna was also teaching, and the two younger girls, Aunt Clara and Aunt Adelyn, were both in high school. For the first time Aunt Anna was free of the most pressing responsibilities—and then suddenly she had two babies in her care. All of the girls helped, of course, but in the end it was Aunt Anna who answered for our well-being. I think it is plain to be seen why she has always had such a special place in our hearts.

We stayed in Grandfather's home for two years, and then, in 1913, Dad married again and we went to our new home. This brings us back to the point in our story where Aunt Anna went to Mother and told her that she could leave now because Howard and I were going to her as to our very own Mother. The gaps in our story have been pretty well filled in now, and the picture is fairly complete. These were the events that lay between the sentence, "Dad was born October 7, 1881 . . ." and the night in June when he and Mother, Aunt Anna, Howard and I sat down at the table for our first meal in the new home.

\* \* \* \* \*

In August Mother and Dad took a short trip to the State Fair in Des Moines. Howard and I went to stay with our Aunts and Grandfather, and though more than thirty years have passed I still remember clearly how excited we were the night that they were to return and call for us. It was a beautiful summer night and we sat out in the front yard and waited for them. I can still see the new black patent-leather slippers that I had for the occasion!

The first year in our new home was a very, very happy one. Almost every afternoon Mother dressed Howard in a white suit and me in a white dress, and took us walking, or to call on some of her friends or, most exciting of all, to stop in and see Dad at his office. This office was a mysterious place to us for we could never quite understand what happened between the time that Dad walked out of the house, and his return. We liked to stop in to see the switchboard with its lights flashing off and on, and on one trip we each had one hundred pennies to use for Christmas presents.

Looking back on it, I realize that Mother went to a great deal of work for us. Those white suits and dresses alone accounted for a good bit of time in washing and ironing, and our daily jaunts ate up the afternoons. Aside from this, she read to us a great deal and I can still remember listening to the first book that she read: "The Little Dutch Twins." Incidentally, she made time for reading aloud even after Dorothy and Frederick were with us.

Our first Easter with Mother could never be forgotten because of the white rabbits. Howard and I had expressed a wish for baby bunnies, so Mother scouted around until she found some. When we awakened on Easter morning they were in bed with us, and they were one of the nicest surprises that we ever had. These little rabbits were the first of



a long series of pets that we had throughout the years.

One memory of this first year stands out with great clarity. Mother had made me a beautiful dress; it had embroidered scallops around the neck, sleeves, and bottom, and there was a blue ribbon sash around the waist. I asked to wear this dress one summer afternoon, and Mother gave her permission (she was never one to refuse requests just for the sake of saying "No" as so many mothers do), but when the ice-wagon came along shortly afterwards I climbed up on the back steps with Howard, and our cousins, Gretchen and Mary Fischer, and the next moment the front of that dress was a muddy ruin.

At this point Aunt Helen Fischer came out, saw the dress, and said mildly that she thought Mother would be disappointed when I walked into the house. I thought so too. She suggested that we remedy the matter, and straightway we went into her house and she washed out the dress and ironed it wet while I sat on a stool and talked to her. She doesn't remember this, of course, but it made a great impression upon me then, and it makes a greater impression upon me now when I think of the things that she must have had to do on any summer afternoon.

We had one wonderful picnic that summer. Fischers drove in their car, an open-two-seated Ford, and we drove in our car, to Nebraska City. I don't know what kind of a car we had, but I do remember that it had a bulb horn on the outside that we squeezed, and the brakes were on the outside too. Perhaps Dad will supply the name right here. (The car that Lucile refers to was an Oakland.—M. H. D.)

Frank Field went with us, for when we finally reached Nebraska City he was the one who waded into the swampy places near the Missouri River and picked great armfuls of lovely yellow waterlilies. We had a picnic lunch in the afternoon, and then when we were packed up again and ready to start home we discovered that Uncle Fred Fischer's car was stuck in deep sand. It took a lot of digging and shoveling to get it out, and then when we were finally set to go he backed around and buried the rear wheels in more sand. The men were hopping mad. I still remember how quietly Howard and I sat, not saying one word, while Dad climbed out and took the shovel to do more digging!

One of the things Mother was very particular about was that Howard and I should go to see our Grandmother and Grandfather Howard, our Mother's parents, at least once a week, and generally much more frequently than that. She always took great pains to see that we looked nice, and furthermore she went with us and was a good friend to Grandmother and Grandfather. On many Sundays they came to dinner at our house, and we had many Sunday dinners at their house. I was too young when Grandmother Howard died to realize what this thoughtfulness of Mother's must have meant to them, but before Grandfather died he told



Howard and Lucile, December, 1913.

me one day that no one else in this world could have been as generous and warm-hearted to them as Mother had always been. I feel that this was a great tribute, for it was a situation that could so easily have been uncomfortable and strained.

Howard and I didn't know that there were going to be any changes in our family, but one night in early May, Dad asked us if we wanted to go and visit Grandfather Driftmier and our Aunts? Of course we wanted to go, so he and Uncle Bert Driftmier, his brother, drove us to Clarinda with a suitcase full of clothes. We spent two or three weeks there, and then one evening Dad arrived in the car and told us that he had come to take us home.

The moment we stepped into the house we sensed that something was different, and before we could wonder what it was Mother had led us into her bedroom. There was a basket on her bed, and in the basket was a baby. Howard and I were staggered. Imagine something like this happening while we were gone! Mother told us that it was our baby, that her name was Dorothy, and that she was going to live with us from that time on. I still remember my first glimpse of Dorothy. She had a great deal of thick black hair, and she was covered with a pink blanket. She wasn't crying then, but it must have been a rare moment, for Mother and Dad still sigh when they remember those first three months of Dorothy's life. She was a colicky baby who slept all day and cried all night, and they finally were so worn out from loss of sleep that they hired a girl to come in and take care of her at night while they caught up on their rest.

One of the things that I enjoyed the most about having a baby in the house was the fact that so many people called to see her. I really thought that Dorothy was my baby, so it gave me a great thrill to show her off, and I insisted upon showing everyone her pretty clothes that were kept in a small wicker chest. Incidentally, this chest is still in the family, and is still known as Dorothy's particular property. When both of us were at home last year we kept Kristin's and Juliana's clothes in it, and once we glanced at each other as we bent over to take out pink sweaters and said that we wondered if our grandchil-

dren's clothes would be kept in it!!

When Dorothy was only a few weeks old we had one of the most severe windstorms that Shenandoah ever experienced. It was really a tornado, and it struck us about five o'clock on a Sunday afternoon. I remember all of this very well for the simple fact that when we started to run to the cyclone cave Dad discovered that the door was locked and the key was missing from its hook.

Where was the key? Well, believe it or not, but I knew exactly where the key was. It was in Fischer's mail box! Why I should have remembered where we had taken the key is more than I know, but at any rate I went tearing across the street for it, and sure enough—it was in the mail box!

I got back across the street with it just before the storm hit us, and I can still remember sitting in the cave listening to the trees snap outside while Dad told us that he never again wanted us to take that key off of the hook, or stuff the ventilator pipe with old twigs and grass! Howard and I had never really understood the purpose of the cave until that afternoon.

Incidentally, I might mention in passing that the Fischers never paid any attention to storms, and that we always thought they missed a great deal. Certainly the Fischer girls thought so, for it was the ambition of their lives to be at our house when a bad storm came up and we had to go to the cellar. For sheer excitement there was nothing to compare with sitting in the southwest corner of the basement and waiting for the worst. The house *might* cave in on us, and we *might* be crushed, but at least we wouldn't be blown into the next county!

That next Christmas we had company from New York. Aunt Jessie Field (she was not yet Aunt Jessie Shambaugh) came to visit all of her family on a brief vacation from her work as national Secretary of the YWCA. She brought Howard an Indian suit because he had promised to stop sucking his thumb, (if Howard is in a fox-hole in the Philippines when he reads this he is going to get a good laugh), and she brought me a beautiful doll with curly hair and eyes that opened and shut. Oh yes, and she brought Dorothy a lovely white wool coat and bonnet lined with silk and delicately embroidered. I was proud of Dorothy's clothes, you know, and I considered this a great addition.

The following summer we had company from California. Aunt Susan Conrad came with her three little girls, Frances, Mary, and Margery, and they spent several weeks with us and with the Fischers. In pictures taken during that time I notice that Mother, Aunt Helen, and Aunt Susan all look quite thin and anxious around the eyes! It must have been a strenuous summer, to say the least.

It was just before school started, when Howard and I were to enter the first grade, that something happened which illustrates the kind of patience Mother had in her relationship with us.

The thing that I enjoyed above all



was taking Dorothy for a ride in her carriage, and Mother never once suggested that I was too young to be trusted with such responsibility. Furthermore, she always got out the nicest coat and bonnet and carriage robe even though I only walked back and forth on the walk in front of our house. She respected the fact that I was proud of Dorothy and always wanted her to appear at the best possible advantage.

On this particular afternoon Mary Fischer came across the street to join me in giving Dorothy her ride, and for quite a long time we pushed her carriage contentedly up and down in front of our house. I don't know what suddenly made us decide to cross the street, something that we had never dreamed of doing before. I don't know if we saw someone on the other side who "needed to see Dorothy" or if we just decided that we were tired of the familiar stretch. At any rate, we decided to cross the street, and since Summit Avenue had not yet been paved and a heavy rain earlier in the day had left it a miserable stretch of deep muddy ruts, we had a struggle in getting the carriage wheels to turn.

It was when we reached the middle of the street that the wheels refused to budge at all, and almost simultaneously the entire carriage collapsed. It was one of those metal carriages that *would* collapse at the right time, only having a baby inside and being square in the middle of a muddy street wasn't the right time. And Mary and I certainly knew this, young as we were. We began shrieking for help at the top of our lungs, and in less time than it takes to write this, front doors had been flung open all up and down the street.

Mother reached us first, of course, and she calmly rescued Dorothy who was entirely unhurt but shrieking her head off on general principles. Then she got the carriage back to the curbing and called to the neighbors that everything was "all right." This done, she took us in the house and washed our faces and cleaned our shoes. Did she give us the scolding of our lives and tell us that never, *never* again were we to take that little baby out riding because we couldn't be trusted at all, not at all? She did not. She made us feel that our intentions were the best in the world, and that we just simply had made an error in judgment in trying to cross a muddy street. Dear Mother! Who else would have been so considerate of the feelings of a proud five-year old?

That winter we had several sharp bouts of illness. Both Howard and I had infected ears that finally had to be lanced, and Dad was very sick for a couple of weeks with something that the grown-ups called "the grippe". This was confusing to us for we thought that gripes were something to hold clothes when one traveled on the train, and if this were true, how could you be sick with "the grippe" unless you had eaten one? I remember going into the closet to look at Dad's brown leather grip and trying to figure this one out.

In the spring something exciting



Mother, Dorothy, Howard and Lucile. June, 1915.

happened—we moved to a new house. The house across the street from Fischers where we had lived since Mother and Dad were married was getting too small for us, so when Dad had an opportunity to rent a much larger house three blocks up the street, he took it.

This is the house that we live in today. We were to be gone from it for nine years, between 1917 and 1926, to be exact, but in 1926 we returned to it and have been there ever since. We think of it as the family home. However, so many, many things have been done to it that it is almost unrecognizable for the house that we moved into in the spring of 1916.

Only a short time after we were settled in the new house, Grandmother and Grandfather Field arrived for a visit from California. This was to be Grandmother's last trip to see her children and grandchildren, and I am glad that she could get acquainted with Howard and me for she must have wondered many times what kind of children her daughter had acquired when she married. I am glad too that she did not find us wanting, and that when she returned to California she wrote a letter, now yellow and faded, in which she said that we were good, thoughtful children!

Our first autumn and winter in the new house moved along uneventfully except for three things. Two of these things were funny little incidents concerning Dad, and the other thing was a serious round of illness.

On October 7th, Dad's birthday, his office force at the telephone company decided to have a surprise party for him, and arrangements were made with Mother to have all of the guests assemble in his absence around nine-thirty in the evening. In those days our house was dark quite early, and the general understanding was that when he returned to the darkened house he would figure that everyone had gone to bed, but when he turned on the lights . . . well, there would be fifteen or twenty people waiting to greet him! And as a great concession, Howard and I were allowed to remain up for the party.

Now this particular little incident has no point unless I tell you in ad-

vance that Dad is less given to forceful language than anyone we've ever known. Not one of us has ever heard him swear; he's always managed to express himself eloquently without any "cussing".

One of the things that he constantly reminded us of was the inadvisability of leaving chairs or toys in front of a door, or anyplace else where a person might walk through the darkness on his way to turning on a light. The last thing he always did at night was to go through a room and move back any object that could be fallen over.

On the night of the party it was decided that it would be a good joke to leave a chair directly in front of the door, and another chair between the door and a light switch. After this had been done we all sat there laughing and giggling in the darkness, waiting for the sound of Dad's car in the driveway. Finally we heard it, and then we sat silent as ghosts while he walked through the back porch and opened the kitchen door. Crash! He hit the first chair! There was a loud shuffling noise, and then he broke loose with everything he had ever thought about "people who didn't have sense enough to put chairs where they belonged". A moment later there was a second crash, and in the time that it took him to get from there to the light switch he finished his outburst.

How we managed to keep quiet I don't know, but it wasn't until the second the room came from darkness to light that he suspected he hadn't been alone. There we sat in a circle ready to burst with laughter. I think it was the only time in his life that he has been genuinely shocked by surprise. And the harder he tried to explain the long history of provocation that led to his violent outbreak the funnier it seemed. No one has forgotten this particular party for it was the first and last time that anyone ever heard him really cut loose.

It must have been about the same time that Dad played a good joke on Mother. We had two telephones in the house, one upstairs in the hall, and one downstairs in the dining room. On this particular day Dad suddenly slipped in through the back door, a loaf of bread in his hand, and whispered to us not to tell Mother that he was at home. She was in the living room at the moment and didn't hear him come in and tiptoe upstairs.

Then the telephone rang in the dining room and Mother answered it. Yes, dinner was almost ready, and would he please stop after he left the office and pick up a loaf of bread? "That was Dad," she said as she went to the kitchen. "He's on his road home for dinner."

We didn't say a word when he slipped downstairs again, tiptoed across the living room, and went out the front door softly. Then in just a moment he was back again, walking in swiftly, as he always did, with the loaf of bread in his hand.

"Why Mart!" Mother said when he walked into the kitchen. "How in the world did you get here so fast?"

"I can make it home in no time,"



he said, "when I put my mind to it."

And mother stood there helplessly trying to figure out how this could possibly have happened. All of us kept it a secret from her for a long time, and she was puzzled by it for weeks. Howard and I thought that this was the funniest thing we had ever heard in all of our lives. And Mother thought so too when we finally explained how Dad had managed to get from the office to the house in about two minutes.

That Christmas we had our usual tree, and I couldn't enjoy anything, not even the beautiful big doll that Mother had spent many a night dressing, for I awakened on Christmas morning with the measles. It wasn't the type of measles that is sometimes called "German Measles", but the old-fashioned kind when your eyes hurt for days if you leave a darkened room. Howard picked them up next, and then Dorothy. They were both very sick, and before I had gotten out of bed their measles had turned into pneumonia. The doctor was there several times every day, and a nurse too, for Mother and Dad were worn out with trying to give the exacting care that pneumonia demands.

Dad came into our room early one morning (it was May the 8th, 1917) and told us to hurry and get dressed—we were going down to Aunt Helen Fischer's for breakfast. We had never done such a thing before, but we didn't question the business, so we hurried to get dressed as fast as we could. I remember most clearly that I couldn't get my hose-supporters fastened, and that when Dad tried to master them he gave up in disgust and said that he didn't know why children had to wear such things!

We had breakfast at Aunt Helen's and then went on to school. We had been told to go back to Fischer's house for dinner, so we turned up there at noon, still not wondering too much about this strange break in our daily routine. Dad was there for dinner too, but not Mother. Where was Mother? Well, she was at home, and after we had finished eating we were to go home and see her.

The moment we walked in the front door of our house we suspected the truth, for something reminded us of the day we had returned from Clarinda three years earlier to find Dorothy, our new baby. We went on into the downstairs bedroom, and there was Mrs. Clark, the nurse who had taken care of Howard and Dorothy when they had pneumonia. She had a bundle in her arms this time, and the bundle was our new brother who had been named Frederick Field.

Frederick was the biggest baby in our family by far—he weighed slightly more than eleven pounds at birth, and there was something about him so unlike a baby that even I knew he looked funny in a very fancy pink wool kimona that Aunt Martha Eaton had made for him. I remember Frederick vividly as a small baby. He looked serious and he was serious. Now that I think of it I'm sure he was the only baby in our family who didn't lend himself to pretty clothes



Frederick was one month old when this was taken.

and fancy blankets. He seemed perfectly contented if someone rocked his cradle once in awhile, and gave him a smile.

Many of the Field grandchildren were rocked in this cradle, from Bob Eaton, Aunt Martha's eldest son, on down the line. Aunt Helen Fischer, who was teaching school in Shenandoah at the time Bob was born, made it for him. It was of plain colonial style, and decorated in a method popular at the time; a design was burned on the soft wood by using an electrically heated needle. On the headboard were the words "Jesus, like you, was a baby once, too"; underneath this was a picture of a Madonna and child. Poppies suggesting sleep were drawn along the sides and on the footboard was a picture of "Wynken, Blynken and Nod". Do you wonder that this lovely cradle was used many times and became one of the family circle's most loved possessions?

Frederick was christened on June 10, 1917, at the Congregational church in Shenandoah. Reverend Ferris, who performed the ceremony, was an old school friend of Grandfather Field's years ago in Illinois. Howard, Dorothy and I were all present for it was Childrens' Day, and Dorothy, who was just slightly past three, made her first public performance by singing a solo on the program. I was very proud of her.

Frederick wore a fancy white dress that day, of course, but had he been christened a short time later it would have been too late for such a dress because he was out of all his first baby clothes by the time he was four months old and into the clothes that Dorothy wore when she was a year old. Even these were outgrown shortly afterwards and then Aunt Martha came to the rescue with rompers that had belonged to her Dwight. In other words, Frederick was a very big baby and so much all boy that he didn't really appear to good advantage until he got into rompers and suits.

I don't think that Frederick was more than six or eight months old when we began calling him "Teddy."

I don't know how this started since "Teddy" is a nickname for Theodore and not for Frederick. The "Teddy" lasted for years—it was always "Teddy and Wayne" through the years they were going to grade school. It must have been when he started to high school that the "Teddy" became Ted, although I can remember that sometimes members of the family slipped and called him "Teddy" after that, much to his annoyance. But for years now it has been Ted, the name that you friends associate with him today. Yet in one way we're back where we started in 1917, for most of the time members of the family now refer to him as Frederick.

There were family events of consequence in 1917. Far away in California there was a double-wedding at Grandmother and Grandfather Field's home in Redlands when Aunt Jessie Field was married to Uncle Ira Shambaugh, and Uncle Sol Field was married to Aunt Louise Oakey. The service was read in the garden, and it must have been a beautiful wedding indeed, to judge by the photographs taken that morning. Aunt Sue's little daughters, Frances and Mary, and Uncle Sol's little daughter, Jean, were flower girls; in the pictures they look charming dressed in white and carrying small baskets of orange blossoms. Grandfather Field wore a white carnation in the lapel of his coat, and looked well and erect in spite of his eighty-odd years.

Immediately after the ceremony Aunt Jessie and Uncle Ira went to San Francisco where they took a boat for Hawaii. They spent their honeymoon in Honolulu and then returned to Clarinda where their new home was almost completed. I believe they were just moving into it when we left our house on Summit Avenue in Shenandoah and went to Clarinda to live in the early autumn of 1917.

Our move was occasioned by the fact that Dad had decided during the summer of 1917 to leave the Bell Telephone Company and go into business for himself. He felt that the tire business was going to become important because more and more people were buying cars, and it seemed like the right time to break away from working for a big corporation and going on his own. This must have been a momentous decision for him to make when you consider the fact that we were a family of six by this time and he was giving up a certain monthly salary for the uncertainties of a new business. But Mother supported his decision and together they decided to make the break.

I realize now how much was involved in this decision, but at that time Howard and I were only concerned with the dangerous hazards of going to a new school in a new town! What were teachers like in Clarinda? Were the second-graders there like the second-graders in Shenandoah? Would we ever get acquainted with them? Those were the problems that concerned us. And I still recall with what a sinking heart we saw the big truck come and take away our familiar things, and how lost we felt



when we walked through the empty rooms just before we too went away.

Our first house in Clarinda was on the corner of 18th Street and Garfield. It had four rooms downstairs and two rooms and a bath upstairs. The thing that interested us about this house was the fact that you could go up four steps out of the living room, cross a little landing, and then go down four steps into the back hall. Or you could go up these four steps from either side and then turn and go on upstairs. This choice of routes for going upstairs interested us, and the first few weeks that we lived there we spent much time just trying the two different ways!

Fortunately nobody was sick that winter. The only two events that happened out of the ordinary were slight accidents that overtook Dorothy. One day she fell against the heater in the bathroom and burned the word "Perfection" right across her forehead. For a long time she went around with this brand — you could read it plainly. Then shortly after this she did something that was really unique—she vaccinated herself! Howard and I had both had our smallpox inoculations that winter, and since Dorothy and I shared the same bed we could only conclude that sometime during the night the bandage came off of my arm when she moved against me. At any rate, one day Mother noticed an ugly-looking infection right between her eyes, and when it didn't improve she was taken to the doctor. He glanced at it and said at once, "Well, the child has a perfect vaccination." And sure enough, that's what it was. No one would choose such a site for a vaccination, to be sure, but as the years have passed it has faded considerably and now it is scarcely noticeable.

That was the winter of oatmeal without sugar and clean-up-your-plate-or-Mr. Hoover-will-get-you. Our country was at war and we were singing "Keep The Home-Fires Burning" and trying not to waste anything. Every night Dad brought home the Chicago Tribune and read the war news before supper. He and Mother bought Liberty Bonds, and Howard and Dorothy and I bought Liberty Stamps. We each had our own book and felt very proud when we went to the postoffice and had new stamps pasted in. This was something connected with the war that we could understand.

In March, 1918 we had a wedding at our house when Dad's sister, Clara, married Paul Otte. They were married at eight o'clock in the evening in our living room that had been beautifully decorated with white flowers and candles. Mother sang "I Love You Truly" before Aunt Clara came down the stairs in her white wedding gown. After the service we had a buffet supper, and when the bride and groom left the house Howard and I were allowed to help throw rice. It was long after midnight when we collected Frederick from next door, and since that was by far the latest that we had ever been up it seemed like an earth-shaking night.

It was one morning in February,



Grandfather Field, Margery and Bill Shambaugh, 1922.

when a messenger boy came to our door with a telegram. Mother was baking bread in the kitchen when we called her to come and sign the paper. She knew what it was before she opened it: Grandmother Field had passed away in Redlands. It was signed by Aunt Helen Fischer who was spending the winter in California, and it read: "Mother passed away quietly at five o'clock this morning. Father very brave."

Memorial services were held for Grandmother Field in Redlands on a February afternoon in 1917. Aunt Helen Fischer, Aunt Susan Conrad, and Uncle Sol Field were the only children who could be present, but the many, many friends whom Grandmother and Grandfather had made during their years in California were present to express their sympathy and friendship. Grandmother's life had influenced many people, and after her death there were letters from all sections of the country written by people rich and poor, famous and obscure. Mother has some of these letters today, and they are touching tributes to a woman who always lived by the principles in which she believed.

Grandmother's body was returned to Shenandoah for burial in the Field family lot. It was a beautiful day, warm and bright, when short services were held in Rosehill cemetery. Everyone who was there still remembers the lovely flowers, the tranquil sense of farewell to a life fully and richly lived and, unforgettably enough, the one beautiful butterfly that flitted in and out of the flowers and then settled down on the casket. It was exactly the kind of memorial service that Grandmother would have wished.

Grandfather Field spent that summer with his children and grandchildren in Shenandoah and Clarinda, and then when autumn came he returned to California. This was a pattern that he followed until his death five years later. Aunt Susan Conrad and her family moved from the small house next door to the big house where Grandmother and Grandfather had lived, and he spent his winter months with them. He traveled alone

until the end of his life, and he was eighty-nine when he died.

Just before school opened in the fall of 1917 we moved to a new house that Dad purchased. This house was considerably larger than the one we occupied when we first moved to Clarinda, and with six of us in the family we certainly needed the extra room. I haven't been in that house for almost twenty-six years, but I still remember that it had a living room downstairs with a small room off of it that we called the music room. Then there was a dining room, a kitchen, a big front porch, an enclosed side porch, and a sort of attached room at the rear that didn't have a name. Upstairs there were four bedrooms and a bathroom. We had a big yard to play in, and out in back there was a tree that had seemed to grow to order for a tree-house and a swing. That swing was wonderful. We climbed to the roof of that attached room I mentioned previously, someone hurled the tire-swing to us, and we caught it and swung away out into space. It would give me chills to watch children doing that now!

It was while we lived in this house that Frederick first gave indications of being a public speaker. He couldn't talk intelligibly, but you never heard such a torrent of sound in your life as he poured out from morning until night. He sat in his high chair, grabbed a spoon, and pounded it on the tray for emphasis when he came to dramatic pauses. It was really a great sight to see him and hear him. I can remember that we were given strict instructions not to laugh at him for he was very much aware of people's reactions and would hide his head and cry if anyone were so rude as to smile at his performance. Dad said then that he couldn't miss being a public speaker and Dad was right. He would have won any contest at one year of age if his lingo could have been translated into intelligible English.

One other thing about Frederick at this age comes to my mind. He was very slow learning to walk—as a matter of fact, I believe that he was twenty-two months old when he finally struck out on his own. Up until this time he got around by scooting, a means of locomotion so hard on his clothes that Mother gave up in despair and made some black sateen sacks for him to wear! One day the telephone rang. It was Dad, and he sounded thunder-struck. Where was Frederick? he asked mother. Mother replied that the children were watching him out in the back yard. "They are not," Dad said emphatically. "He's down here at the store." And believe it or not, but that's exactly where he was. He had scooted the three-and-a-half long blocks down to Dad's store, and turned in at exactly the right place. Fortunately there was very little traffic in those days, and since it was a scorching morning the front door of the store stood open and he could scoot right in. Imagine what Dad's sensations must have been when the bookkeeper called him and told him that his baby was there un-



der his own steam!

On November 11th the Armistice was signed and World War I was over. It so happened that Mother was down town when the word came, and she called me at home to tell me to put Frederick's wooly suit on him and bring him down in his buggy. The reason I recall all of this with such clarity is because I had to go into a closet off of the music room to get his wraps, and I was mortally afraid to go in there for the silliest reason in the world: I was convinced that a German spy was in there. We had heard much discussion of spies, and it seemed to me that they were everywhere, even in our house. I finally mustered up courage to go in and get his suit, and then I started down town with him in his buggy. As I walked along I saw men (I thought they were men but I realize now they were only high school boys) come out and fire guns into the air. Whistles were blowing and bells were ringing. It was an exciting time. And later that night there was a big torch-light parade around the square, an old black horse-drawn hearse was brought out, and the Kaiser was burned in effigy.

On a Sunday afternoon in March, the 9th of March, 1919, to be exact, Howard, Dorothy and I were sent to Grandfather Driftmier's house to visit with him, and with Aunt Anna and Aunt Erna. It was only about three blocks from our house, and we went there so frequently we didn't question the decision that we were to remain for supper and to spend the night. We were just getting ready for bed when the telephone rang and Aunt Anna answered it. She talked for a moment, and then she turned around and said to us, "You have a surprise at your house. Can you guess what it is?"

Wayne was a beautiful baby, by far the most beautiful baby in our family. Everyone said so, and his pictures prove it. He had very dark brown hair, and quantities of it. His brown eyes always had a certain happy light in them, and when he smiled (which was just about all the time) he had genuine dimples in both cheeks. He was the happiest baby in the world, and he brought joy to everyone, particularly to Aunt Jessie Shambaugh. In October of the previous year she had lost her first child, little James, at birth, and this was a tragic blow that saddened the entire family. Aunt Jessie had to have a baby to love, and when Wayne came along he helped to ease a little of the loss. Through the years he has always had a special place in her heart because of this.

Summer came at last (I'm sure that all children think summer will never come) and in the early part of it we had ample excitement because Dad bought a new car, a big, shining Reo with yellow-spoked wheels, and for the first time Mother learned to drive. This gave us all such a series of thrills and scares that the passage of many years hasn't dimmed those memories in the least.

It was really Aunt Helen Fischer and not Dad who put Mother in the



Wayne was six weeks old when this was taken in 1919.

driver's seat. One summer afternoon she was visiting us, and as she talked she kept looking at this big gleaming new car that stood in the driveway. Probably her mind wasn't on the conversation at all, for suddenly she said, "Leanna, wouldn't you like to learn to drive that car?"

Probably Mother said at first that she didn't have time to drive, but Aunt Helen talked right around this point. She had been driving for years herself and couldn't imagine having a nice car like that simply standing in the driveway on a hot summer afternoon. The upshot of the entire matter was that she got in the car and drove down to the Fairgrounds. The race track was a perfect place to practice, so she had Mother drive around and around until she felt that she could manage by herself. Then they drove back home with Mother at the wheel, and when we children saw her turn into our driveway we were absolutely speechless. Imagine Mother driving our car!

The next noon she decided to give Dad the surprise of his life by going down to the store and bringing him home to dinner. But these fine plans were nipped in the bud at the very outset by a really spectacular disaster. During the morning all of us children had been playing in the car, and we moved all the gadgets on the steering wheel. Cars don't have those gadgets today, but in 1919 every model had levers that you pushed this way and that—and we pushed. Mother stepped on the starter without looking at those gadgets, and immediately there was a noise that rocked the neighborhood. At the same time clouds of black smoke and pieces of what looked like inky cotton came rolling out of the car.

It seems that Mother had "blown out the muffler", and we found pieces of it in the neighbors' yards on both sides of us. People came running for a block or two in every direction.

Everyone was sure that some building had blown up. I still remember the bleak silence that greeted Dad when he returned to the house for dinner that noon. He delivered a pretty stern lecture about everything concerned with the car, and although we children didn't keep out of it in the future for the temptation to go on imaginary trips in it was too great, Mother never again got behind the wheel without looking first to be sure that the gadgets were all where they should be.

After the muffler was repaired Mother decided to drive to Shenandoah on a sunny afternoon and take all of us to visit the Fischers. This was a trip that we'd made many times with Dad at the wheel, and it didn't occur to any of us that it would be any different if Mother drove—but it was! In those days very little grading had been done on the highway between Shenandoah and Clarinda and there were many steep hills. (One hill was so steep that Grandfather Driftmier always turned his car around and backed up so that the gasoline could flow into the engine.)

For the first five miles Mother got what they called a "good run" for all of the hills and we made the top without any trouble, but then she came to one that she couldn't get a run for and half-way up she had to shift gears. She had never shifted gears before on a hill, and of course the engine died. Simultaneously the car started slipping back down the hill at a good clip, and that was when the screaming began. Howard and Dorothy insisted upon getting out at once, and I was torn between getting out and staying in the car for certain death!

Eventually we all climbed out and stood at the side of the road literally wringing our hands and crying as Mother tried again and again to start the engine, shift gears, and make the top of the hill. I've forgotten now, of course, how long it actually took to accomplish this, but it seemed to me that we spent the entire afternoon standing there crying. I might add that everytime the car slipped back we all sent up such a wild howl that it's a wonder people didn't come from miles around to see who was being murdered.

At long, long last Mother made the top of the hill, we all climbed back in very badly shaken, and we continued on our trip to Shenandoah. We hadn't been there long when the telephone rang. It was Dad and he was half-wild. He'd gone home from the store to find us missing and one of the neighbors told him that "Mrs. Driftmier had driven to Shenandoah." Knowing her feeble capabilities as a driver he was certain that we'd never reach our destination alive. But we had! And we returned safely furthermore, and I must say right here that although Mother had many a close shave and although Dad had every fender on every car pounded back in to shape time and time again, Mother never had an accident in which a soul was scratched.

Howard was the one who worried the most about Mother at the wheel.



I'm sure that Okinawa doesn't hold more anxiety for him than one of his childhood rides with Mother. He was one of these "born drivers" and it gave him one start after another merely to see Mother drive down to get the morning mail! Well, one thing is certain: children of today who grow up with their Mothers at the wheel have missed a great deal. They should have been young when cars were still something of a rarity, when their Dads automatically did the driving that was done, and when their Mothers actually decided to learn to drive and carried through their decision. Those were the days.

The family photograph that appears on page 24 was taken on an April afternoon in 1919. As though it were yesterday I remember the frenzied activity that was involved in getting all of us dressed and down to the studio. Once there we had long delays while Frederick went into a crying spell and came out of it, while Dorothy refused to have her hair freshly combed (those fancy ribbons were my idea!) and while Dad tried to get us maneuvered into the best positions. Only Wayne slept unconcerned through it all. But we prize this picture very highly, and I'm sure that Mother and Dad have never regretted the effort involved in making that trip to the studio.

On an August afternoon in 1919 Mother and I were sitting on the front porch sewing and talking when the idea of lemonade for supper struck us. Mother said that she would go in and call Dad and ask him to stop and get the lemons, and she went on in the house to do this. In a moment she came back with a very surprised look on her face, and said that just as she picked up the receiver someone on the party line said, "Did you know that Mr. Driftmier bought a house today?"

This was enough to make anyone hang on for a moment, and she did.

The transaction couldn't have been made more than an hour or so earlier, but full details of it were given and when Mother came back out to the porch to tell me she was pretty much thunderstruck by it all. Of course Dad hadn't just turned around and bought a new house without consulting Mother. This particular piece of property had been discussed back and forth for some time. But Mother had left the final decision to Dad, and when he made up his mind to buy it he went head with the intention of surprising her with the news.

We decided that we'd act as though nothing at all had happened. Mother went ahead and called about the lemons, and we sat down to supper as usual when Dad arrived. I remember that I could hardly keep from giggling during the meal, and there were times when Mother got up and went to the kitchen hurriedly after more bread or more lemonade. I don't know how long Dad would have kept his secret, but suddenly Mother looked around and said, "We'll need new rugs for the living room, you know," and that did it—the cat was out of the bag.

This new house, the last one we



On the day Wayne was one year old this picture was snapped on the front steps of Grandfather Driftmier's home.

were to occupy in Clarinda, stood not far from the edge of town on the corner of 18th and Garfield streets. It was considerably larger than the house we were living in, and there were several features that pleased Mother very much. One of these was a large sleeping porch (with a southwest exposure) that could accommodate three double beds and a couple of cribs. Then there was a big garage practically attached to the house with a laundry room built on to it, and this meant that all of the business of washing and ironing (a terrific job for our family) could be done out of the house.

The yard was big enough to be divided into several sections—I'm sure that Howard thought it covered several acres because he had to mow the grass.

I believe it was because Dad wouldn't let him mow the lawn by the light of a flash light attached to the lawn mower, that he decided to run away. I can remember so well how Mother watched him gather his things together, even suggested that he roll them up in his raincoat and fasten a belt around them. The nearer he came to being ready to go, the fainter of heart he became. Our helping him get started took most of the thrill out of his adventure for him. As a last straw, when he reluctantly started up the road with his pack on his back, Mother called to him to come back a minute so she could take a picture to keep to remember him by. This was a bit too much for Howard. He came back, unpacked and put things away, glad to be received back into the family circle again. I guess lots of boys and even some girls go through the experience of wanting to "run away." If yours decide on such a move, try Mother's little plan for it seemed to work.

There were a number of fine old pine trees, and one big elm tree in back where Howard and a friend built a tree house shortly after we moved. This was the most elaborate treehouse that I've ever seen, for it was on several levels, had built-in bunks, and it seems to me that they even strung up electric lights. This was the treehouse, incidentally, that Wayne climbed up into when he was eighteen months old! Howard was at school and couldn't rescue him, so Mother

climbed up there herself and brought him safely down.

We moved to the new house just before school began in September. It was the right season of the year for doing extensive work in the yard, and Mother planted several hundred Darwin tulip bulbs around the small stone wall that bordered the driveway, and along the white fence that divided the two sections of the yard. Wayne sat in his buggy in the sun while she worked, and when we children came home from school we helped rake leaves for big bonfires after supper.

A little later in the autumn we all piled into the car and drove to the country after apples and walnuts. There was a fine fruit and vegetable cellar in the basement, and Dad had the satisfaction of seeing it filled almost to overflowing. I remember that we wrapped the Jonathans and wine-saps individually in paper, and had a good time doing it.

The first winter we lived in the new house we had a roaring fire in the big living room fireplace every night. It was Howard's job to get the logs in and after supper he always went out and brought in an armful plus kindling. We had popcorn almost every night, and big bowls of apples, and Dad read while Mother sewed. Those were very happy evenings, and they are still so vivid that it doesn't seem possible twenty-five years have passed since then.

Shortly after midnight on February 2nd, 1921, Margery was born. We had all wanted a girl very badly, and had had her named Margery Anne for months, but I hadn't really dared hope that we'd actually get a girl and when I returned to the house in the morning after spending the night at Grandfather Driftmier's, I was so overcome with delight at Margery's arrival that I broke down and cried. In fact, I was so excited that I put my dress on wrong side out and it wasn't until the morning at school was half over that I discovered it!

Margery was a pretty baby too, and an unusually good baby. Dorothy and Frederick had been such serious feeding problems that I don't know if Mother only just got into the swing of things with Wayne and Margery, or whether they really were the kind of babies that you hear about and almost never see regardless of the fact that they were the third and fourth. The third and fourth and beyond this, if you have a really big family, are supposed to cause no one concern at all, you know. Well, at any rate Margery simply slept and ate and grew and was no more trouble than a life-sized doll.

It's a fortunate thing that this was the case, for when she was only about two months old Wayne became critically ill and almost died. Exactly what caused this illness, and what the illness actually was, no one ever knew, but it's always been the supposition that he climbed up a ladder that had been left standing against a cupboard in the garage and got into some old medicine that had been stored there. It would seem that a top shelf in a garage cupboard might be a safe place. With Wayne around it evident-



ly wasn't, for although no one actually saw him on the ladder we've always thought that in the few minutes he was alone he must have climbed up it.

Only a few minutes after he'd been found in the garage he became deathly ill and went into convulsions. Nothing like this had ever happened in our family before, and Mother was sure that he was dying. I thought he was too, and ran screaming across the street to get one of our neighbors. On my way I met Howard and told him to run and get a doctor. He set out like the wind itself, and the result of this was that the doctor whom Mother had called and the doctor Howard found both arrived at the same time—and Dad too.

He had convulsions periodically throughout that day and the next day, and for quite a long time was gravely ill. It took a number of weeks to get him back on his feet, and some place we have a picture taken during this time where he looks like only a shadow of his usual self.

But at last he was well again and playing with Teddy and the world was right.

It was a hot June morning in 1921 when I learned exactly how much trouble can overtake a person who has been genuinely careless—and every letter of the word "Careless" should really be printed in red ink—it was that kind of carelessness. I think you'll agree when you read what happened.

The D.A.R. Chapter of Clarinda decided to have an extra-special party for their annual Flag Day meeting, and as part of the program there was to be a minuet danced by eight girls, all daughters of members. Elaborate old-fashioned costumes were made for it, and to add the final touch, each girl was to wear her hair in the style of the period with many puffs and rolls piled high on top. I don't know where the other girls got the necessary switches, but I know only too well that a dear friend of Mother's offered to let me wear hers. These were extraordinarily beautiful and expensive switches, and she didn't possess them as a matter of vanity—she really needed them!

This friend had an unusually lovely soprano voice and at the time I was rehearsing the minuet every afternoon she was putting in long hours of rehearsal for a cantata that was to be presented at the Methodist Church. It was an ambitious undertaking for the choral society that had been organized, and once a week a voice director came from Des Moines for the rehearsals. Mother's friend was to sing the leading soprano role.

Well, the minuet was a great success, my hair-dress was a big sensation, and all in all I felt a vivid sense of triumph when it was over. As soon as we returned home Mother carefully wrapped the switches in paper and told me to return them at once. I said that I would—but I didn't. And the next morning when Mother saw them still lying on the living room table she asked me to take them home without delay, for the cantata was to be given that very



Grandfather Field, Mother and Margery, aged six weeks.

night and she knew her friend would want to get them back into shape.

I went down town for something that morning, and it was when I turned into the post-office that Aunt Jessie Shambaugh drove up along the curbing and called to me to hurry home at once. From the tone of her voice I knew that something dreadful had happened, and I practically flew up hill and down hill to get home. When I walked into the house (no, to be exact, I *tore* into the house), the woman who had come to help do some cleaning told me to run to Mother's friend's home at once. Iran. And when I arrived there I found them both in tears.

It seems that the cleaning woman had picked up all of the newspapers from the living room table and burned them in the fireplace, and along with the papers, of course, went the switches that I had neglected to return. After all of these years I still find myself feeling a little weak and giddy when I remember the sensations that swept over me as I realized what had happened. If you had searched the world over you couldn't have found an unhappier person than I was at that moment.

The entire thing seemed to be doubly bad because of the cantata looming up only a few hours away. Mother's friend had to appear because no one else could sing her role, and so she appeared wearing a hat and no one knew why the leading soprano chose to do such an unusual thing when no one else wore hats!

The switches were replaced at great expense to Mother and Dad. I couldn't help financially, but obviously I had to do *something* to compensate for the trouble and expense I had caused, so I was given the job of wheeling her baby for a couple of hours every day for the summer and up through the warm weather of au-

turn. I know that I read all of the Victor Hugo books from the library while I wheeled, for I rigged up a prop for the book and could wander dreamily down one street and up another without realizing where I was until we reached curbsings.

All of this happened long ago and what was once a real tragedy to me has become now only a funny story, but certainly it explains the fact that I have a definite aversion to borrowing anything, and if something simply has to be borrowed, I'm literally on pins and needles until it has been safely returned. It explains too, the fact that I always try to do things the moment they need to be done—I'm not a procrastinator. So, although it was an expensive and painful lesson, I'm sure that in the long run it was just about the most valuable experience that I ever had.

This was the summer too that Mother, Grandfather Field, Wayne and Margery, made a trip to Illinois. The rest of us children stayed at Grandfather Driftmier's house, only I trudged the length of the town to do my wheeling every day. Grandmother Field's only sister, Mrs. Eliza Cox, lived in Toulon, Illinois, and Grandfather wanted to visit her again. Mother too wanted to see the town where her mother had been reared, and to meet friendly relatives for the first time.

Margery and Wayne were very good throughout the entire trip, and I'm sure that Mother really enjoyed this first little vacation that she had taken since her marriage. Certainly she looks very happy in the pictures that were taken, and some of the sweetest snapshots we ever had of Wayne were taken on this trip. Margery acquired such a reputation for being a perfect baby that years later when Dad and I went there on a brief business trip, people still asked about her and said that they remembered her as the best baby they'd ever seen.

Nothing untoward happened to those of us who stayed at home except for the fact that Frederick put a kernel of corn into his ear and had to go to the doctor to have it removed. We were happy at Grandfather's house for Aunt Anna was like a real mother to us, but I still remember how excited and happy we were when the travelers returned. Dorothy and I were both shocked at how much Margery had grown in only two weeks.

Just before school started that fall we had a great scare when Wayne almost drowned in our lily pool. This pool had been constructed in such a way that it was thought to be fool-proof, because a shallow shelf only about eight inches deep had been built around the side and it extended far enough into the water that if ever a child fell in he could promptly scramble to his feet and get out. But not Wayne! When he fell in he promptly scrambled right into the center of the pool rather than out on to dry land, and the first thing any of us knew about it was when we heard a neighbor scream to us from across the street. Mother had left Wayne playing on the big screened-in porch with



the door securely latched, and she had gone about her work in the kitchen thinking that he was safe enough. Someone left the door open and out Wayne went in a flash—and straight to the pool because it was forbidden territory. Well, when Mother heard that scream she went flying towards the pool just on general principles, and when she saw Wayne floundering helplessly among the water lilies she jumped right in and snatched him out. After he had been thumped a bit he was as good as new, but the next day an unsightly chicken-wire fence went up around the pool and it stayed there until Wayne was old enough to be trusted near the water. The carefully planned shelf that had added considerable expense to the pool was money thrown away so far as Wayne was concerned.

Summer vacations were always a long, drawn-out lark for us children, but I can understand now why Mother was relieved when the morning school bells rang the first week in September. That fall there were three of us to get started down the hill, and three to stay at home. I don't believe that Mother had any help in the house at this particular time, and I'll never live long enough to know how she got everything done. We just took for granted the fact that there would be a good hot meal on the table every noon, and that we'd sit down to another good hot meal at night. During the week we weren't of much help except that Dorothy and I always took care of Margery when we returned home from school. She was a good natured baby who never objected to being dressed and undressed when we played "house" with her, and she didn't even complain when we somehow got her into our doll carriage and wheeled her all around.

On Saturdays all of us really pitched in and helped. It was Howard's job to wax the living room and dining room floors, and he devised a wonderful time-saver. Instead of going over it laboriously on his knees for the final polishing he got Wayne or Frederick to sit on an old coat, and then pulled the coat around at a great rate. It gave a wonderful polish to the floors, and the boys loved it. I've never heard of any other floors being polished in such an unorthodox fashion, but it worked.

I started to help with the Saturday baking at this time, for we never faced a weekend without a cake in the house and a jar of cookies. It was early in my days as a cook that I achieved the reputation of being a dangerous cook, and it all came about because of the coffee cake. I tackled this cake with the cook book beside me while Mother was upstairs cleaning, and when it came to the step that called for one cup of coffee, I reached up for the coffee can and put in one cup of coffee. Then I finished the cake, put it in a pan, and started it to baking. When Mother came downstairs and glanced in at the cake she couldn't imagine what all of the brown spots were, but when it came out of the oven . . . well, to this day



Lucile and Dorothy had fun wheeling Margery in their doll buggy.

I've never heard the last of my first coffee cake.

Mother did a great deal of sewing that winter. She was always making something, of course, but the reason I remember this particular stretch of sewing was because Frederick and Wayne had lovely new blue wool sail-or suits with white silk braid stitched around the collar, and Dorothy and I had identical dresses that were the joy of our lives. Dorothy's dress was of pale rose wool with an accordin pleated skirt, and lovely soft wool flowers embroidered on the yoke. Mire was just like this in a pale green. It took many long hours of embroidering and sewing at night to make all of those things, and I understand now that the reason she found energy to do it after a hard day was because it gave her so much satisfaction to see her children start to Sunday School in things that she had made with her own hands.

Sunday School was something that we never missed in spite of blizzards or thermometers soaring close to the hundred mark. We stayed to church too. Mother sang in the choir, and we sat in the back pew with Dad. After church we hurried home to eat our Sunday dinner, and until cold weather arrived in earnest we took long, rambling drives in the afternoon. But we always arrived home in time to set out for Christian Endeavor at five o'clock. We were taught at an early age that if you belonged to an organization it was your duty to participate in it. I don't remember that there was any excuse short of illness that was considered valid grounds for missing Sunday School, Church, and Christian Endeavor.

We slid through that winter without mishaps of any kind. The only person who caused sleepless nights was Frederick, and many were the times that Mother and Dad were up all night long nursing his croup. Frederick was given to alarming attacks of this ailment, and sometimes it would be five or six in the morning before it had subsided to the point where they could stop the treatment. I wonder now how Mother faced her day at home and Dad faced the day

at the store after one of these sessions.

Wayne was the member of our family who always gave us the worst scares. He was the one who climbed up into Howard's tree-house, you may recall, and the only one who couldn't be trusted near the lily pool. Well, in the spring of the following year he had one of the narrowest escapes of his life.

It was a warm May morning and Mother had put him on the screened porch while she cleaned the living room. It must have been at this time that he learned to unlatch the lock by climbing on to a chair, for all of a sudden Mother heard a wild scream from across the street. She ran to the door just in time to see our good neighbor, Mrs. Parkins, run out to the middle of the street, pick up Wayne, hold him high above her head, and then stand there while a big drove of cattle separated and passed around her on both sides. It seems that she was out working in her yard when she looked up and saw the cattle coming down the street. At the same moment she saw Wayne run out from the parking, and she knew that he would be trampled because he was so small. There wasn't time to get across the street so she just stood there with him while they went around.

It really seemed as though no doors or locks were barriers so far as Wayne was concerned. I can't remember that any of the rest of us ever had close shaves, and I know for a fact that Frederick never even had a bad tumble or wandered away from the yard. But Wayne was into something all of the time, even until he was twelve and ran an ice-pick completely through his hand and had to have anti-tetanus injections. It seems almost needless to add that he was the only one of us who was ever knocked down by a car! I don't know how Mother managed until he was old enough to go to school and was safe for at least a few hours of the day.

On the morning of August 16th, 1922, Donald Paul was born. We older children knew that he was expected, of course, only we always referred to the coming baby as "she" and her name, Marcia, was waiting for her. Dorothy and I anticipated having a new baby sister to play with, and I don't believe that it ever really occurred to us that we'd have a brother. We must have had our hearts firmly set on Marcia, for when Aunt Jessie told us the news she prefaced it by saying, "Your mother says that you're not to feel badly that it was Donald Paul because he is a lovely baby."

Honesty compels me to state that Donald Paul was not a pretty baby. After all, we had had Wayne and Margery and we knew pretty babies when we saw them! But Donald Paul was far from a beauty. He made up for it, however, by being as strong as an ox, and even better natured than Marge. I don't remember that he ever cried or fussed. We could do anything we liked with him, and he thoroughly enjoyed it. When he was old enough to sit in a high chair he came to the table and was part of the big crowd around the table. There



were no feeding problems at our house. Everyone ate what was put before him, plates were cleaned up, and there was no spooning food into any child's mouth once he could manage by himself. I often remember this when I hear haggard mothers complaining about their one and only youngster's refusal to eat. It's too bad that the Driftmier table can't be reconstructed for all of these cases—and I add in a whisper, for two little girls I know who are named Juliana and Kristin.

In the winter of 1922 radio came into our lives. Little did we dream when that first crude set came into our home that someday it would be the medium through which all of us were to know each other. Imagine how astounded Mother would have been if someone had told her that in years to come she would be talking over the radio herself every day! She would have doubted the sanity of anyone wild enough to make such a forecast, and so would the rest of us, for our wonderful radio with its howls and squeals belonged to a world set quite apart from our everyday world.

I remember that this first radio was ugly as sin—a big black contraption with all of the workings exposed, much wire dangling from it in every direction, and a couple of pairs of earphones. It stood on a high window-seat at the end of the living room, and we had many a fight as to who would get to put on the earphones and for how long. Mother finally had to time us — ten minutes at a crack. We spent every evening fiddling with the dials and trying to get distant stations—that seemed to be nine-tenths of the excitement of the radio—pulling in far away places. I still recall how excited we were when we heard a Los Angeles station, faintly and weakly, but still Los Angeles. Howard kept a log of every station we managed to pull in, and it worried him to death if one of his friends beat him in the search.

Almost every night some of the neighbors came in to listen, and invariably the radio balked and acted fractious the moment they came in the door. We could be listening to Schnectady and hearing a piano solo as clearly as a bell, but just let someone come in from the neighborhood and instantly the piano was gone and nothing could be heard but wailing and whistling static. Oh dear, those were certainly the days! I've thought of them many and many a time when we were driving through the mountains listening to a concert on our car radio, or when we were riding on the train and being entertained by a radio. It all seems very far away from those winter nights with the earphones.

The spring of 1923 was just coming in when Grandfather Field died at the age of eighty-nine. It was the first winter he had spent in Iowa rather than in California, and he alternated visiting Aunt Jessie Shambaugh, Aunt Helen Fischer, Uncle Henry Field, and at our house. That winter he seemed a little more frail, but he still walked swiftly, and still kept an active interest in life. He spent much



Donald was six months old when this picture was snapped with Dad beside him.

time playing with his grandchildren that winter, and I believe that the last picture we have of him is the one taken with our Margery and Bill Shambaugh in a big pile of leaves. No one saw Grandfather fall on the steps of the Public Library, but when he was found a few minutes later he was taken to Aunt Helen's home where everything possible was done for him. Perhaps in a strictly medical sense there was an explanation for his death in the terms of apoplexy or something similar, but his family felt that his body simply could no longer meet the demands of living that eighty-nine active years had put upon it.

Funeral services were held at the Congregational church, the church that he helped to organize years earlier, and many friends came to pay their respects to a genuine pioneer. I remember clearly that one of the most moving parts of the services came when the minister read selections from the Memory Book. This was a book written by the Field children, printed by them, and presented to Grandmother and Grandfather as a Christmas gift in 1915. The fly-leaf reads: "The Memory Book, Tales of Sunnyside Farm, by the Field children and friends." It is a book running to 121 pages that recalls a thousand and one different things, and it was Grandmother and Grandfather's most prized possession. Selections from this book were read for Grandfather's services, and somehow it was the perfect way of saying farewell.

Aunt Jessie Field Shambaugh has written a beautiful tribute that I would like to copy here, for it calls up everything that he was and represented. In it I'm sure that you will see your own father if he was a pioneer who believed in meeting life on its own terms.

"I wish here that I could write something that would give you a true glimpse of what my Father was like. His courage never ran out. He met hard things with a song in his heart and a twinkle in his eyes. He kept his face toward the future and eagerly tried out new things.

"How he appreciated and understood and helped life in every form to blossom! For him, the good black earth he homesteaded on the Iowa prairies brought forth abundantly and in great variety. As I write I fancy I catch across the years the aroma of his luscious Senator Dunlap strawberries; glimpse again the transparent pinky-yellow of his Maiden Blush apples and feel the firm bigness of the Black Mayrillo cherries hanging in such abundance on his young orchard of two-hundred trees.

"I walk in memory through our white clover pasture just beyond the cider mill and look back across the buckwheat field to the long sweep of the walnut grove which Father told me he started by pushing the walnuts down into the ground with his heel.

"I see again the lovely things he planted in our country yard—"Thousand-leaf" and "Moss" roses; lilacs, flowering currants and quinces; trumpet vines, yuccas; silver leaf maples and giant pines. Even as a child I sensed that his big reason for doing this was so that our Mother could always have around her the beauty she treasured as of such great worth. To her he carried the first fruits and the most perfect flowers.

"My father felt that farming was a very honorable occupation. To produce food that a hungry world might be fed; to work in close partnership with Nature; to have the time for thought and the chance to be independent—made it like a glorified calling to him. He was glad his home was on a farm and would not have willingly changed places with any city person.

"I think he would have said that this was because in the country one is so close to living things. Yet I think his greatest interest was in human lives and he had a gift for finding good in all sorts of people. He judged them not by race or wealth but by their qualities of mind and spirit. When I was a growing-up girl I liked to look at the pictures in our red plush album. Among the interesting ones was a view of our father taken when he was serving in the Iowa State Legislature and standing beside him a tall, different looking man. When I asked Father about him, he said,

"That is an Indian friend of mine—a fine man who has done much for his race."

In the summer of 1923 Dad made a long trip, his first real trip in many years. He went to the Pacific Northwest first to visit relatives in Seattle, and made a side trip to Vancouver, British Columbia. Then he went down the coast to California and visited Aunt Sue Conrad and her family in Redlands. He was contemplating a major business move at this time, and the chief purpose of the trip was to look over various situations. I remember clearly that during his absence a storm came up, and all of us felt that the worst would happen because Dad wasn't with us!

During the time that Dad was on the West Coast we had quite a few picnics and short trips to visit relatives and friends. Everyone was



glad then that Mother had learned to drive the car, and by this time we had all acquired enough confidence in her abilities to sit back and enjoy ourselves. She did have one minor mishap during Dad's absence, but the fenders on our Studebaker had been pounded back into shape so frequently that one more repair job wasn't even discernible. The only thing I'll tell you about this particular mishap is to state two facts; it began raining one afternoon while we were driving in the country, and Mother attempted to drive into a barn that looked big enough to accommodate our car. You can put the story together from that.

One of the short trips we made was to visit Frank Field and his family who were then living a few miles south of Shenandoah. We arrived at the tail-end of considerable excitement, for it seems that Zoeanna (who was then about three or four years old) had cried with an ear-ache, and when she was taken to the doctor he extracted a large June bug from her ear.

We had a very good time at Frank's home and then went on to visit Mother's cousins, the Coys, on a farm southwest of Shenandoah. It was there that Dorothy picked up her lifelong aversion to chickens because one pecked her hand when she was giving it corn—it's her only vivid memory of that entire summer. The rest of us had a grand time tearing around the farm, and as a consequence we returned home to Clarinda feeling that we had had a marvelous vacation and that we had traveled hundreds and hundreds of miles rather than only twenty-five or thirty.

When Dad returned home he brought news of relatives and friends whom Mother hadn't seen since she left California to be married in 1913. I think that all of this made her just a little bit homesick, and she was happy when Dad finally decided to close out his business in Clarinda and move to the West Coast. This came in January of 1924, but during the Christmas holidays we knew that he was leaving and that it was to be our last Christmas in that house. Howard and I were old enough to register this fact with considerable emotion, and we discussed it and wondered, doubtfully, if any other place could really be home. California seemed as remote to us as Tibet. We simply couldn't imagine living there.

The business with which Dad was to be associated was the Shenandoah Flag and Decorating Company. This concern furnished flags and flag poles to merchants for uniform street decorations on special days, and there's a good chance that your town has this equipment for thousands and thousands of towns and cities all over the United States made the investment. The firm had been operating only a short time when the volume of business became so heavy it was decided to open a branch on the West Coast. This is the branch that Dad was to open, and at a later date he was to have offices in New York for the same firm.

There were so many details concerned with breaking up our Clarinda



Dad has always distributed our family Christmas gifts.

home that it was decided Dad would go on alone, and that we would follow at the end of May when school was out. We children were glad of this for we didn't want to change schools in the middle of the year. Six months is a long stretch, either in peace time or war time, and since we knew Dad would be gone this long we were a pretty subdued bunch when we kissed him goodbye on a January afternoon. Howard was so subdued that he even offered to keep a sharp eye on the furnace without being reminded!

Until Mother sold the house it didn't seem too real that we were moving to California, but when she told us that she had finally disposed of it the big change seemed close at hand. I say "finally disposed of it" because it was a large house and large houses are more of a marketing problem than a small house. Only a good-sized family would be interested in it, and as it turned out a family with five children purchased it and have lived in it now for twenty-one years.

However, Mother's real problems began when the house was sold, for that left her face to face with the big job of packing everything we'd accumulated through the years and getting it started west to California. The amount of packing that she had to do can be judged by the fact that it took half of a freight car to accommodate our goods. Fortunately, Grandfather Driftmier came to do the heavy lifting and crating, and stayed right with us until the last box was nailed shut. Under any circumstances this would have been a blessing, but it so happened that Mother sprained her back the very first day she started packing books and for a week she had to stay in bed.

A woman came in to help manage things during this hectic time, but I was supposed to assist her as much as I could and one of my duties was getting supper at night. Just what we were going to eat on this particular night I've forgotten except for the fact that scrambled eggs was part of the menu. At any rate, I started to walk to the stove with a dish of eggs in one hand and a pitcher of cream in the other hand when I stumbled over the carpet-sweeper and fell.

I didn't want to break the eggs or spill the cream so I made no attempt to break the fall and simply went down full force on one knee. I had had many falls before as any growing child does, but this was the first time I had been unable to move and get up. I just lay there helplessly until Mother hobbled downstairs to see what had happened. Eventually I managed to get up, but my knee was very painful and I couldn't walk without limping for several days. I noticed too that when I got down to give the floors their final waxing I couldn't bear to place my weight on that knee. But it never occurred to me or to anyone else that there could be anything seriously wrong with it, or that a doctor should examine it. After all, if we had run to the doctor every time we fell down there would have been one of us seven in his office practically every day.

A few nights before school was dismissed a crowd of our friends in the Freshmen class came to our house for a party and gave Howard and me farewell gifts. Dorothy's friends also had a little party for her, and of course Mother's friends and clubs entertained her at farewell get-togethers. It was these things that made us realize how soon we would be leaving, and the pangs of saying goodbye to old friends almost wiped out the excitement of traveling far, far away.

On the day that school was dismissed Howard left for Wagon Mound, New Mexico to visit Dad's sister, Aunt Adelyn Rope and her family. They lived on a ranch near Wagon Mound, and Howard expected to spend the summer there and then join us in California. We thought that Howard was practically grown up when he started on that trip, but there were pictures taken the day he left and in them he looks very far from grown up!

After our furniture had been taken away we stayed with Aunt Jessie Shambaugh for the few remaining days, and then on a hot noon in June the seven of us drove down to the little station in Clarinda to take our train for Villisca. There we were to transfer to another train that would take us to Omaha, and in Omaha we were to pick up the big Union Pacific train that would take us to San Bernardino, California, where Dad was waiting to meet us.

I don't believe that I'll be exaggerating one single bit when I say that our family was the sensation of the train! Sooner or later everyone asked me guardedly if we really belonged to one family, and when I assured them that we did their faces registered everything from astonishment to doubt. I think that some of the confusion came from the fact that Frederick, Wayne and Donald were all dressed just alike in new brown suits, and although they weren't the same size the general impression was one that troubled near-sighted people.

We had two full sections on the train, and every morning as soon as the berths were made up Mother had the porter bring tables for our big box of games and books. These things helped get us through some of the



long hours, but when the novelty wore off and the children started roaming up and down the aisles it was my job to keep them off the luggage of nervous people, and to discourage kindly souls from stuffing them with cookies and candy. A girl was on that train who was later to become a famous movie star, and it was she who gave Wayne all of the dreadful coconut cookies that finally made him sick. I just couldn't do anything about those cookies!

When the train stopped, as it did most frequently, my real worries began for all of the children wanted to get out and run up and down the platform. I was dead certain that one of them would get left along the road, and it was in Salt Lake City that Frederick really did get left—almost! The conductor had called "All Aboard" twice before we discovered that he was missing, and I dashed back into the station, actually weeping wildly, to find him eating an ice-cream cone at the counter. That was a dreadful scare.

We had a great collection of food with us that caused the porters to study our meals with awe. Aunt Jessie Shambaugh had packed an incredible assortment of food, everything ranging from a whole-cooked ham and I don't know how many fried chickens, to bags of fruit and homemade cookies. Oh yes, there were big loaves of home-made bread too. I still remember that when meal-time rolled around and Mother spread a white cloth on one of our tables, the porters stood and speculated as to what more might be unearthed from that big box. They said frankly they'd never seen so much food! On the last day we still had a big collection left, but Mother said that she wanted us to have the experience of eating in the diner, so we let the envious porters take over our big box and we all tramped into the diner.

At that time the price of food on the diner was staggering. You couldn't get even breakfast for less than a dollar, and ice-cream was fifty cents a dish. But anyway, food prices aside, it's a good thing that we didn't eat on the diner until the last day because the seating arrangements had to be shifted about at great length so that two big tables could be pushed together for us. There weren't any catastrophes in the diner, I'm happy to say, not even one glass of spilled milk, but I can still recall my shocked horror when the bills were presented for lunch and dinner. My!

We were a very tired and grimy bunch when we went to bed the last night on the train. That was before the day of air-conditioning, and every window in our car had been up while we traveled across the desert. You can imagine the cinders and sand and dirt. It was hopeless to try and keep the boys clean, and even Margery, who usually looked very dainty, took on the aura of hopeless grime. It was a long trip too. We were on the road three full days and three full nights, and even I, who had never traveled before, was under the impression that we stood still about as much as we moved.



This is the home in Redlands, California that Grandfather Field purchased when he retired from active work on his ranch.

But on the last night Mother promised us that when we awakened in the morning we would see palm trees and orange trees and mountains, and tired as we were we had a hard time getting to sleep for the excitement that we felt. We found it hard to believe too that Dad would actually be on the San Bernadino platform waiting for us. We hadn't seen him for six months by this time, and six months is a long time to children.

In the morning when we awakened and raised the shades in our berths we looked out to exactly what Mother had promised. There were the palm trees, long avenues of great, shaggy palm trees, and there were the orange orchards, trees with big oranges really growing on them. And behind the avenues of palms and the orchards of orange trees were the long ranges of beautiful blue mountains that Mother had described for us over and over again when we begged her to tell us about California. I thought then, and I still think, that the San Bernadino Valley is one of the most beautiful places in the world.

We were only a short distance from San Bernadino when we awakened, so it was a wild scramble to get dressed and to assemble all of our countless belongings. We lost one of Margery's shoes in the general confusion, and for a while it looked as though she'd have to get off of the train with one shoe off and one shoe on. But at the last minute it turned up and the day was saved.

Finally our big train started slowing down, and finally it stopped in front of the station that said "San Bernadino" and we knew at last that we were really in California. We looked out of the windows and saw Dad standing on the platform, and beside him was Aunt Sue Conrad and her three little girls, Frances, Mary and Margery. They had all driven down from Redlands to meet us. We cried when we saw Dad because we were so happy to see him, and he marveled constantly at how much all of us had grown, particularly Donald. He was at an age when every month still makes a big difference.

After all of our luggage had been claimed we divided up, some of us to ride to Redlands in Aunt Sue's car, and some of us to ride in the new car that Dad had purchased in Cali-

fornia. I remember that the boys wanted to get out and pick up oranges that were lying on the ground beside the road, and Aunt Sue said that if they waited until they got to her house they could help themselves from bushel baskets of oranges! Mother had told us that people in California bought them by the bushel, but it just didn't seem real to us.

When we reached Aunt Sue's house in Redlands (this was the house that Grandmother and Grandfather Field occupied until Grandmother's death) we found that there really were bushel baskets of oranges, tubs of ripe olives, and a huge freezer full of orange sherbet. We couldn't understand why the Conrad girls weren't interested in eating oranges, and they couldn't understand why the Driftmiers were so excited about seeing them in *bushel baskets*.

While Aunt Sue was fixing a late breakfast for us, Mother went all over the house room by room noticing old, familiar things, and spotting changes that had been made since she had left it eleven years earlier to return to Shenandoah and marry Dad. We children realize now what a wrench that morning must have been for her, but at the time it didn't occur to us that this house where we found ourselves was full of memories of Mother's parents in every direction that she turned.

After the first week in Redlands Mother and Dad left us children with Aunt Sue and went to Los Angeles to find a house for us. Dad's business interests had been transferred from northern California to Los Angeles, and for the first time we were to have the experience of living in a big city.

At the end of a few days Father and Mother returned with the news that we were to live in a new house in Alhambra, a suburb south of Los Angeles. We simply took this fact for granted, but it seems that they had had a dreadful time locating suitable housing. Even in those days it was hard to find any property owner who wanted to rent a nice house to a family with children, and when Dad stated frankly that he had seven children the interview always ended abruptly. For a time it seemed that the Driftmiers would have to pitch a row of tents out on the beach, but at the end of one long, discouraging day, they found a real estate agent who didn't bat an eye when he heard about the seven children and drove at once to show Mother and Dad a house that had been completed only that week. It was a Spanish style house of white stucco and stood next to a nice orange grove in a section that was relatively undeveloped, so with a sigh of relief Mother and Dad took the house on the spot and told the agent that they would occupy it within three days.

By the middle of June we were all settled in the new house and getting adjusted to the idea that when we looked out the front windows we saw a big range of mountains, and when we looked out the side windows on the east we saw oranges hanging on the trees. It still seemed remarkable to me that we were actually living in California, and I thought that the



name of our street, Sierra Vista Drive, had a very foreign flavor — much fancier than plain old Garfield street in Clarinda, Iowa!

It took us children a while to accustom ourselves to the idea that Dad wouldn't be home for dinner at noon, and that our big meal of the day came in the evening. We'd grown up with dinner at twelve sharp when Dad returned from the store, and it was strange to see him drive into the city in the morning and not return until after six in the evening. As a matter of fact, a good many things were strange to us small-town children. It seemed curious to live so far from town that we had to take a bus or a streetcar to reach the stores; a trip to the park was an all-day expedition because we had to reach it the same way; and even Sunday School seemed altogether different from our old Sunday School in Clarinda.

Sundays were the days that we really enjoyed, for after we returned from Sunday School we all piled into the car and took a long drive. Our favorite place was the beach at Santa Monica, and Dad always tried to park in a secluded spot so that we could hang bath towels over the car windows and take turns putting on our bathing suits. We had grand times playing in the waves, although the rip-tides were so dangerous all along the coast that we had to stay fairly close to the shore.

It was on one of these picnics that Donald gave us a dreadful scare. He had been playing around the edge of the waves while all of us kept a sharp eye on him, but somehow none of us had been looking directly at him for a moment or two and the first thing we knew he was missing. Now to have a child turn up missing on the beach is enough to make anyone's heart stop beating, and of course the first thing we thought of was that he had stepped out too far and been washed under by a big wave. He was only two at the time and one wave would have done the job.

We started running wildly up and down the beach shouting his name, scanning the water, and wishing that there were other people having picnics near us where he might have wandered. But there was no one near us, and we were beside ourselves with anxiety when a mound of sand slowly rose up — and there was Donald! He had wandered down the beach a short distance, lain down, covered himself completely over with sand, and had a good rest. He hadn't heard us shouting his name, of course, and looked completely amazed when we ran toward him crying and carrying-on! That incident gave us all such a scare that we didn't go back to the beach for a long time.

We children were happy in that house, but Mother was far from satisfied with it. As I have told you, it was a brand new house, we were the first tenants, and it had been rented to Mother and Dad with the understanding that "all of those children" wouldn't damage it in any way. Under the circumstances there couldn't be any relaxation for Mother. All of the woodwork was dead white, all of



Very few pictures were taken during the short time we lived in California, but we wanted to include this one of the children having breakfast in front of their playhouse.

the walls were soft pastel colors, the hardwood floors had been polished until they shone, and it was a struggle from morning until night to keep these details looking as though no child had been within a hundred miles. Then, ironically enough, after all of Mother's efforts to keep the house in beautiful condition, she was the one who caused the disaster.

The kitchen in that house was beautifully enameled in ivory, and the large sink had double tile drainboards. This was the setting for the disaster. At that time butter was around sixty-five cents per pound, and since we used a pound every blessed day of the week, Mother mixed it with margarine. She had just started to open the little pellet of coloring when her hand slipped and the brilliant orange dye shot up the side of the wall and down into the white tile drainboard. This was a genuine catastrophe for nothing would remove it, and whenever you walked into the kitchen that big orange stain on the wall and drainboard simply hit you in the eye. Mother worked for days trying to remove it and finally gave up. At the same time she gave up the idea of trying to live in such a house with our big family, and entirely on her own she started out to find a more suitable place.

One night when Dad came home to dinner she told him that she had found a wonderful place for us while she was out walking with Margery and Donald, and since he was as unhappy about the new house as she was, he agreed at once to go and see it. This second house that we were to occupy in California was really ideal for our purposes. It was located in Monterey Park, a suburb that adjoined Alhambra, and was next door to the fashionable Midwick Country Club, for many, many years one of the famous spots of southern California. This particular house was low and rambling with beautiful flowers in the yard, wonderful wisteria vines hanging over the front and side porches, and a darling little playhouse in the back yard, a playhouse big enough for seven or eight children to sit in at one time. There were four bedrooms, a nice garage, and big yard — and it was on a dead-end street, which meant almost no traffic at all.

This house was empty when Mother discovered it and she went next door to inquire about the owner. It seems

that these people were the owners, and two nicer old people never lived. They loved children, they said, and we were welcome to live there as long as we liked and to do whatever we liked with the house and the garden. They even went so far as to say they had hoped that a nice big family might want it, for they had gotten lonely without children next door. All of this sounded almost too good to be true when you think what a struggle Mother and Dad had had trying to get anything for us to live in, so they said that they would give notice on our present house immediately and occupy the second house as soon as possible.

Thus it happened that on a morning in late August the moving van pulled up to our door once more and we moved to the rambling brown house where the owners felt that we would be an asset and not a liability. All of us loved this new house, and if circumstances hadn't arisen that changed the entire course of our lives, Mother and Dad would have bought that house and made it our home. There was something very warm and welcoming about it.

In September Howard returned from Wagon Mound, New Mexico, where he had been visiting Aunt Adelyn and Uncle Albert Rope, and we were all together again. Starting to school that fall was a strange and new experience for all of us. Margery and Donald were the only ones not affected since they were still at home with Mother all day, but Dorothy, Frederick and Wayne all walked over a mile to attend a grade school in Monterey Park, while Howard and I walked three blocks and then picked up a bus that took us to the Alhambra High School where we were both sophomores. It was our first experience with a big city high school where there are a number of large buildings for various classes, and at first we thought we'd never find our way around from building to building. Every noon I ate my lunch in the gardens that surrounded the Alhambra Public Library directly across the street from the high school, and then spent the rest of my lunch hour reading. I didn't know how to go about getting acquainted with someone among those twelve-hundred students and regretted that I hadn't grown up in the city so that I would have old friends. I didn't realize then that if you just moved from one section to another of a city you might as well have moved two-thousand miles so far as getting acquainted was concerned.

But I didn't have long to think about all of this, for by the middle of October I had developed a serious limp and was in pain all of the time. The knee that I had injured when I fell in Clarinda in May was beginning to give me great trouble and since August we had been going to different doctors to see what could be causing the permanent pain. There was no outward evidence that anything was wrong, but I was finding it increasingly difficult to walk and my leg never ceased aching.

By the middle of October I was go-



ing up and down the staircases at school after the others had passed to be sure that no one would jostle into me, and I was afraid to ride on the school bus for fear someone would bump into my knee. I could scarcely keep up with my daily routine, and finally matters reached such a pass that I had to give up completely.

In our dreary rounds from office to office we heard diagnoses that ranged from 'infected-tonsils—poison settling in the knee' to the reassuring "it's all in her mind." The latter verdict made us all feel better, for if it were only something in my mind it could very promptly be gotten out of my mind! Yet all of the concentration in the world on getting it out of my mind didn't seem to improve matters the least bit, nor did any medicine or treatment bring good results.

Thanksgiving rolled around bringing the Conrads from Redlands to have a big dinner with us, and to the Driftmiers it didn't seem like Thanksgiving at all with the doors standing wide open, a hot sun shining outside, and palm trees waving in the afternoon breeze. We'd been brought up on the old poem about "Over the river and through the woods" with its snow and sleighs, and that was our idea of Thanksgiving. It would have been the crowning blow to eat our Thanksgiving dinner in the form of a picnic at the beach as many people did.

In every family there comes a time when trouble seems to descend so heavily that for a spell it blankets out the fact that there actually have been long months, or even years, when this particular circle of people wasn't confronted with great anxieties and burdens. Such a time came to us in the winter months of 1924. During the lowest ebb of those hard weeks it was difficult for us to believe that we had ever known a time when we were free from pressing worries.

By the second week in December, Mother and Dad were so dissatisfied with the doctor then in charge of my perplexing case, that they insisted he refer them to a bone specialist without delay. This was done, and on a foggy morning we drove in to the big medical building in Los Angeles to consult the specialist. At the end of two hours I was sent into the outer waiting room while Mother and Dad were called into his office, and to this day I wonder how they managed to come out of there smiling and cheerful for they had had a bad shock. The specialist's verdict was grim no matter how you look at it; he had told them that I was suffering from what he suspected was the most deadly of all bone diseases, and that the only faint chance of saving my life was to amputate the leg immediately. This isn't what I heard, of course. I was simply told, and very convincingly, that there was a slight bone infection that could be remedied by a simple operation. This version of the trouble came as such a blow to me that I doubt very much if I would have survived had I known what I was actually facing.

News like this wasn't to be taken lying down, so to speak, and for the next few days we made the rounds of



Frederick and Wayne in front of our house at Monterey Park.

other specialists. They confirmed the opinion that had already been given. But when it was all said and done, Mother and Dad could hardly believe that this was the final judgment, and their thoughts turned towards Dr. Arthur Steindler of Iowa City. Now there was a man who knew precisely what was what; with his opinion they could rest in the knowledge that no stone had been unturned, that whatever was to happen could in no human way be avoided. After very little discussion it was decided that Dad would take me to Iowa City at once, and thus it happened that on the late afternoon of a December day we left together from the Pasadena station.

It never occurred to me when I left the University Hospital in Iowa City that there was any doubt about my complete and permanent recovery. But there were grave doubts in the minds of everyone else, and although I didn't know any of this at the time. I learned years later that when Dad had his final meeting with the doctors they told him that I had very little chance of surviving. Under any conditions, they could not be certain of my complete recovery until five years had passed.

This unhappy verdict made a great change in our family plans. Dad had intended to return to California with me when I was well enough to make the long trip, but his final meeting with the doctors put a cloud over these plans. When Mother heard the news she wrote that she wanted to return to Iowa where we could be among our relatives and friends, and when I was consulted as to whether or not I wanted to go back to California I said flatly that I didn't. I didn't know that anyone was worried about my condition, but I did know that all of my old school friends were in Iowa and that I thought I would be lonely in California.

After a few days with the Fischers I went to visit Aunt Anna, Aunt Erna and Grandfather Driftmier in Clarinda, and while I was there Dad told me that Mother and the children were coming back to Shenandoah around the first of March. This was the best news that could have come my way for I was dreadfully homesick for all of them—Dad and I felt like fish out of water away from the rest of the family.

The weeks that we waited for them to return seemed very long in spite of all that was done to make them go swiftly. During the day while Aunt

Anna and Aunt Erna were both gone teaching school, Grandfather Driftmier and I played many a game of checkers. He was quite a master of the checker-board, but he was also so skillful in the way he let me beat him that I never suspected I wasn't a real whiz at the game! When checkers became tiresome we played phonograph records from Grandfather's good collection, and then when he didn't feel well enough to do anything at all (he was still a sick man from the stroke of apoplexy he had suffered in December) I worked on some new dresses that I was making for Margery. This was the first genuine sewing I had ever done, and I whiled away many an hour embroidering and appliqueing the pretty packaged dresses that could be purchased in those days.

The month of February passed in this fashion, and then in early March I went back to Fischers in Shenandoah, and Dad went to Omaha to meet the family when they came in on the Union Pacific train. That was a joyous reunion! There may have been more tears shed than is customary at such reunions, but none of the sad, sad things that had happened could really shadow the happiness that all of us felt to be together again. I couldn't get over how much Donald had changed. In the three months since I'd seen him he had learned to talk fluently, and it made him seem very grown up. It was also a source of much gratification to me that Margery could wear all of the dresses I'd made for her, and they looked absolutely lovely!

Our household goods were many weeks on the road and since we needed our own roof immediately we moved into a furnished house—the first and last time our family ever did this. We had just about two weeks together in the new place when it was time to say goodbye to Dad again. He had accepted a job with the eastern office of the Shenandoah Flag and Decorating Company, (this was the same concern he had been associated with in California) and was to open a new office in Jamestown, New York. How we hated to see him go! And how he hated to go too. Only the fact that it was an excellent business opportunity salvaged the situation . . . that, plus the fact that he expected to return and see us every three or four months.

Dad had been gone only two or three weeks when Aunt Helen Fischer stopped by one afternoon to ask Mother if she would like to come down and talk on her Mother's Hour program over radio station KFNF. Mother protested that she wouldn't have any idea about what to say, but Aunt Helen brushed this aside and said that after all she lived with seven children and ought to be able to think of something that would interest other mothers. Mother was so uncertain about it that she said she thought she had better plan to sing a couple of numbers, so I went down to play for her while she sang.

This all seems very funny now when you stop and think that for twenty years Mother has been talking, not singing over the radio for a half-hour every day! I can just imagine what



she would have said on that afternoon long ago if anyone could have looked into the future and told her this. As I remember it, she sang on Aunt Helen's program for a few times, and then gradually Aunt Helen accustomed her to the idea of "saying something" and eventually she was talking for ten or fifteen minutes at a stretch. By the time Dad had returned from New York for his first visit she had reached the place where she felt at ease talking on the radio, and he was greatly impressed when he went to the studio and listened to her.

When school opened that September Donald was the only child left at home with Mother. Howard and I were both entered as sophomores in high school, and the other children were scattered down through the grades. It was a quiet, happy autumn and winter without a single spell of illness except for one short siege with the mumps. I say "short siege" but it was hectic while it lasted since almost the entire family was down at once. We looked almost like a cartoon strip for one week in December, but fortunately everyone was well again when Dad came to spend Christmas with us.

While he was at home during the Christmas holidays plans were made to move in the spring. The furnished house in which we were still living had never been regarded as anything but a temporary home, and Dad was anxious to get us settled in our own property. He has always believed firmly that a man with a family should own his home, and consequently our spells in rented houses have been few and brief.

In April he returned to make final arrangements for buying the house that we live in today, and that all of us think of as the family home. It is the house that we lived in before we moved to Clarinda in 1917—Frederick was born in it. The fact that we had lived in it before made it seem familiar and homelike to us, and all of us were glad to be back on the hill.

Incidentally, our only session with the fire-department came just the day before we moved. Dad had gone up to the new house to clear a great deal of accumulated brush from the large garden, and he made the same discovery that a good many other people have made—a sudden gust of wind can put burning grass out of control in a split second. One minute Dad's fire was burning safely and harmlessly exactly where he wanted it to burn; the next minute he saw flames licking at both our garage and the neighbor's barn. He couldn't leave it to run for help, so it wasn't until his shouting attracted neighbors who ran to call the fire department that he had any assistance.

The next day we moved into our old-new house, and it was to be the last time that Mother would have to tackle the problem of where to put things and how to arrange furniture to the best advantage. I say the last time as though I were utterly confident that the folks would never move again, but I don't think they ever will.

As soon as we had gotten settled in our new home, Dad had to return to New York again. This time it wasn't



In 1927 Mother published her first copy of *The Mother's Hour Letter* and this picture appeared on the cover.

quite so hard for him to go since we were now living in our own property, a big garden was planted, we had a new car to get around in, and all of us were well. In only one short year things had taken a big swing upwards for the better, so under these circumstances it wasn't quite so difficult for him to say goodbye.

Every Sunday night Mother sat down and wrote a long, long letter to him telling about the events of the previous week. We children weren't as good about writing as we should have been, particularly since he took time to write to all of us individually and to send us gifts from time to time, but I guess that all youngsters consider correspondence a chore rather than a pleasure.

One of the funny incidents of our family life took place only a few weeks after Dad had returned to New York. One summer morning our family was just climbing into the car to start on a picnic when a salesman came over to Mother and began talking with her hesitantly. In a few moments he excused himself for keeping us waiting and then added, "I want to talk with you later, but I see that you're just taking your Sunday School class on a picnic so I'll go on for the time being."

This certainly came as a shock to all of us! We realized that we made a big crowd when all seven of us piled in to go places, but it had never occurred to any of us that we looked like a Sunday School class. My! I can still remember his face when mother said airily that it wasn't her Sunday School class, but only her family. He did turn up later in spite of his embarrassment, and I suppose that mother bought something from him since she could rarely bring herself to turn anyone away, particularly when it was a scorching summer day.

That was the summer too when Uncle Sol Field came from California to visit us and brought with him a pet mountain lion. None of us had ever heard of having such a pet, let alone

having one staked in the front yard. School children came for blocks to see him, and sometimes he put on a good show by spitting and snarling and acting ferocious. As a matter of fact, I believe that he really was on the ferocious side, and I noticed that Uncle Sol never approached him without warning, and that he never turned his back on him. Dad's fondness for living things has never extended to mountain lions, and it's a good thing, everything considered, that he was far away in New York during this particular time. Even Mother admitted that she couldn't grow attached to the beast!

When school opened that fall Donald entered the first-grade, and then for the first time since Mother was married she didn't have a single child at home. It was about this time too that Dad returned from New York to be in the home offices of the Shenandoah Flag and Decorating Company, and we took up the normal pattern of family life for the first time since January of 1924 when he left for California. It was a relief to all of us to have Dad permanently with us. I know that we children were convinced that nothing could happen when Dad was at home. Lightning might strike every house around us but it would spare our house when Dad was in it, and we were sure that a tornado might level every house in town but jump over ours if he were at home. With these firm beliefs you can see why we felt uneasy when he was in New York for weeks at a time.

With our entire family complete and very much at home, you can imagine the daily work that had to be tackled. I'm sure that we took care of the breakfast and supper dishes, but I'm positive that we always washed the dinner dishes at noon for the system that we worked out was a marvel of efficiency. None of us can ever forget it, and now when we're grown we often refer to it with mingled amusement and pride, amusement because it must have been a sight to behold, and pride because we worked out a system that an efficiency engineer would have been hard pressed to surpass.

As soon as we had finished eating dinner, Mother went into her office and closed the door to get her radio program lined up. She left the house shortly after one to go to the studio, and it made a big difference to her that we were able to take over the noon work. Dad always went out on the front porch if it were warm enough to sit there, but if the weather didn't permit this he sat in the living room and tried to close his ears to the din. The crash of one dish alone didn't bother him at all, but if more than one broke he jumped up from his chair and came hurrying to the kitchen to warn us that if this kept up we wouldn't have a dish to eat from.

The minute we had finished eating (and Mother always had a big hot meal for us at noon, everything from a roast to a good dessert), Wayne hurried to the kitchen and took up his position at the sink where he was known officially as Master of the Pots and Pans. He was responsible



for washing, wiping and putting away every pot and pan that had been used. Margery was referred to as Mistress of the Garbage. It was her job to scrape all of the dishes, dispose of the garbage, and clean the sink. Frederick cleared the table and straightened up the dining room, while I washed the dishes and Dorothy wiped. Donald wasn't expected to do anything, and for some reason, now forgotten, Howard had no part in this schedule either.

Well, you can imagine the noise! There wasn't any argument since everyone knew what he was supposed to do and did it, but just the activity and clatter of dishes was terrific. We always timed ourselves and were very proud when we could tear through a kitchen full of dishes in nine minutes—we could never beat that, try as we might.

There are two little incidents connected with this system of ours that I must tell you about. The first is Dorothy and her terrific aversion for an open cupboard door. She cannot bear to see a cupboard door standing even slightly ajar, and I know that it dates from our wild skirmishes with the dishes and the fact that I insisted she close the cupboard doors when she had finished putting things away. It sounds mild to say that I insisted—what I really did was beg and plead and nag at her to close those cupboard doors. Finally, in desperation, I began calling to her after she had gone down the street to school, and many were the times she walked back a full block to close the doors. Evidently it made a more lasting impression than either of us realized at the time.

The other incident concerns Wayne. He was always a very cheerful, helpful Master of the Pots and Pans. I can see him yet tackling a big stack of them without a word—in fact, we all felt guilty he was so cheerful! On this particular day in summer Mother was standing at the kitchen door when she heard Wayne and one of his little friends walking up the alley discussing a circus parade that was to be held the next noon. The other little boy was trying to get Wayne to promise to go with him at 12:30, but Wayne's reply was this: "Well, I'd like to go but it all depends upon how many pots and pans there are."

When Mother told us this on the side we all excused Wayne so that he might go to the circus parade, but the phrase has lasted through the years, and when anyone wants to do something that conflicts with set responsibilities someone is bound to pipe up with, "Well, it all depends upon how many pots and pans there are."

Christmas of that year brought us one of the biggest surprises that we ever had, and I would like to tell you about it for it is one of the milestones in our family history.

When Mother's Kitchen-Klatter program was still in its first year she began receiving the names of hundreds of invalid children and older shut-ins who needed encouraging letters and remembrances. This big file of names troubled her greatly. She felt that something ought to be done to bring happiness to these people, but where



Margery with the doll her father sent to her from New York City.

to start was the big problem. There was no organized program for shut-ins, and since mother didn't have secretarial help of any kind and handled every detail herself, the days simply couldn't be stretched long enough to do what she wanted to do for these people, many of whom were acutely lonely and unhappy.

All through the summer and fall of 1926 this problem loomed up larger and larger, and finally in early December she decided to appeal to her radio friends for help in bringing happiness to these shut-ins. Everyone who cared to contribute was asked to send what she could spare, and with these contributions mother intended to pack Christmas boxes for every single person whose name had come to her. This was a tremendous job for it meant buying gifts appropriate for people ranging in age from three or four up to eighty-five or ninety, packing these gifts into separate boxes, and mailing them.

I have forgotten now the total sum that was contributed, but I'm sure that it amounted to several hundreds of dollars, and when you consider the fact that the bulk of it came in nickels, dimes and quarters, you can see how many people responded to this appeal to help all of those who needed cheer at Christmas time.

Mother planned to do her shopping in Omaha for it was the only place where she could get great quantities of things. One of her friends who also broadcast a daily program offered to help her do the buying and packing, and they set a date around the middle of December for this trip.

On the day that they went to Omaha Mother's Kitchen-Klatter program was taken by Mrs. Bill Sharp, a wonderful cook who helped around the studio a great deal, and she announced that since Mother had spent so much time and energy planning surprises for shut-ins, she would like to have a surprise for her in turn, and that the gifts would be given to her during

her broadcast at 1:30 on December 23rd. Mrs. Sharp emphasized that she wanted it kept a secret, and promised that at this end of the line there would be no leak.

As the packages came in the clerks at the post office placed them in big baskets and put them aside where dad could pick them up and take them to the seed-house. There they were sorted by Mrs. Sharp, opened, names and addresses taken off, and little cards attached bearing the names of the friends who had sent them. It was a bigger job than Mrs. Sharp had reckoned with when she said casually that she thought a radio shower for Mother would be nice. None of us children knew a thing about it, and only Dad was in on the secret.

Well, the 21st of December arrived, and on this day Mother finished packing and mailing the last box to her shut-in friends and drew a big sigh of relief. So far as she knew not one person had been overlooked, and even five boxes of gifts had been wrapped and were simply waiting for the name of a person whose plight might come to her attention at the last minute. She saw the last box go out in the morning mail, and then sat down to read the letters that Dad had just brought up from the postoffice.

There was an unusually big pile of letters that morning and Dad sat down at the dining room table and began opening them for her. When he had finished he idly picked up the last letter in the stack and began reading it. A few moments later he put the letter in his pocket, and right then and there began one of the funniest incidents that we children ever witnessed!

Mother wanted the letter and Dad refused to give it to her. She protested that it was her letter and that she had every right to it, but Dad flatly insisted that she had no business reading it! You can imagine the fever-pitch that Mother's curiosity attained. She simply had to have that letter. But she didn't get it, not until the afternoon of December 23rd, and this is the reason why:

Letters written in an ugly spirit have always been few and far between in Mother's mail, but some particular listener must have felt quite mean and ornery for she took time to sit down and write a letter telling mother that her radio friends were planning a big shower of gifts for her. By some happy twist of circumstances this particular letter, the only one that breathed a word about the shower, was the last one on the stack and consequently the one that Dad picked up. Mother was always very glad that circumstances combined to keep it from her, but until she knew what it was about she had no peace at all for wondering what was in the letter that Dad refused to let her see.

Mother went down to the studio at 1:30 on December 23rd to give her usual program, and she didn't suspect a thing until the doors were opened and people began carrying in big tables heaped high with gifts. It was the only time she ever found herself completely unable to go ahead with





Radio was a new and thrilling adventure when this picture of five sisters and their brother was taken in 1926. Uncle Henry Field was standing in back. From left to right in front are Aunt Susan Conrad, Mother, Aunt Jessie Shambaugh, Aunt Martha Eaton and Aunt Helen Fischer. The occasion for this picture was Aunt Susan's brief visit from her home in Redlands. Note the identical dresses made for this particular afternoon when they all went to the original radio studio of KFNH to broadcast.

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her program—she was simply overcome with amazement at the tokens of friendship. How I wish that a recording had been made of that afternoon's surprise party; it would surely be a cherished possession for the family now after twenty years have passed.

On that afternoon we children had all gone to the church to rehearse for a Christmas program and consequently didn't hear Mother broadcast. We returned to the house about four o'clock, and the first inkling we had of the unusual event was when Mother and Dad arrived right behind a big seedhouse truck that was piled to the top with huge boxes.

When the boxes were brought into the house and opened we were speechless and that is the literal truth. We knew that mother had many good radio friends but we were completely unprepared for anything like her shower. I remember that we stayed up until after midnight going through the boxes and marveling at the many beautiful things.

For a long time Dad had a complete list of everything Mother received, but it has disappeared now and I must trust to my memory for the fact that there were around four-hundred dish towels, two-hundred bath towels, hundreds of wash cloths, handkerchiefs and pot-holders, fully thirty-five pairs of embroidered pillow cases (many of them are still in use at the house), sixty aprons, twenty-two luncheon sets, and innumerable doilies, dust caps, laundry bags, dresser scarfs and sofa pillow covers. There were also countless boxes of cookies, cakes and candy.

It took Mother weeks to get over the shock and thrill of that shower. We had the gifts on display for a long time, and then we children were all permitted to go through them and make a selection of things for our future homes. Dorothy, Margery and

I are all using many of these gifts today, and the boys' boxes are waiting for them when they get married. Of course many, many of the things are still in use at Mother's house, so you can see it wasn't a shower that was quickly over and forgotten. And there is no doubt in any of our minds that Mother ever had a bigger and happier surprise.

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It seems to me, in retrospect, that the excitement of Christmas and Mother's radio shower hung on longer than any other holiday season we've had since then. Even after we started back to school in January there was still the flavor of something unusual in the air—you couldn't quite put your finger on it, but there was the feeling that a surprise of some kind might be right around the corner. The truth of the matter is that it took us a long, long time to get over the shock of that radio shower. We hadn't truly realized until then that Mother had made a big circle of friends who felt as close to her as our next-door neighbors. I suppose that it was this realization which was responsible for the holiday atmosphere lasting so much longer than usual.

As soon as school was out that summer we began making big plans for a trip to Twin Lakes in Minnesota, but before I tell you about this I want to skip ahead just one year to an incident concerning Frederick and the Fourth of July.

Big, dangerous firecrackers were forbidden at our house back in the years when their sale was permitted everywhere, and our fireworks were limited to innocent little baby crackers that mostly sputtered and fumed before they went out, and equally innocent sparklers for after dark. Children on every side of us might shatter the very heavens with their pow-

erful firecrackers, but these were not for the Driftmiers. That is why Howard and his giant firecracker created such a sensation at our house.

It was understood clearly, of course, that this giant cracker would be set off in the open country and not anywhere near town. I still remember what it looked like—an enormously long and thick tube with a ten-inch fuse. A sort of tripod arrangement went with it, and I suppose that the general idea was to set the thing up, light it, and then run at a great clip across the field. I can't imagine how it happened that Howard was permitted to fool with this unless it was the fact that he was eighteen and supposed to be competent enough to handle it.

I remembered how we begged him to take us with him when he was ready to explode it around six o'clock on the night of the Fourth, but he said that he couldn't be responsible for seeing that we were far enough away, and anyway it would make such a racket that we could sit right on our own front porch and hear it. All day we kept hearing explosions from the country that sounded very much like Howard's giant cracker would sound, so we weren't too disappointed—we *could* sit right at home and hear it.

About three in the afternoon the folks went out for a drive, and somehow or other it developed that only Frederick and I were left at home. In those days I spent a good many hours at the piano, so I sat down to do some practicing and Frederick settled himself on the back porch to do some reading. It was as peaceful a scene as anyone could imagine.

Suddenly, without a second's warning, I had the sensation of being lifted bodily from the piano stool! Simultaneously there was a tremendous roar, and then the entire house shook and the piano actually trembled under



my hands. A few seconds later clouds of smoke and dust began pouring into the living room from all sides, and I was actually so shocked and frightened that I couldn't get up to investigate.

Just about the time I found strength to move, Frederick came running into the living room screaming and moaning and saying something that I couldn't begin to understand. My first thought was that the house had been struck by lightning even though there wasn't a cloud in the sky, and I assumed that Frederick had been struck too and was dying! It took a long time to get him quieted down to the point where I could understand what had happened, but finally I pieced it together.

Frederick, it seems, was absolutely fascinated by that giant firecracker. He studied it at great length, turned it over and over, and tried to imagine what it would sound like when it exploded. At last he decided to have a little perilous fun by lighting the fuse, allowing it to burn for a second, and then dousing it in cold water. Since it was a long fuse we could understand why he thought that he would have ample time to put it out.

The coast was clear for his experiment. I was the only one at home and I was no hampering influence because I was completely absorbed in my music. He slipped up to Howard's room where the firecracker was placed for safe-keeping and came downstairs with it. He knew that he had to be near water so he took it into the bathroom where he could plunge it under the faucet. Then he struck a match and lighted the fuse.

Probably he thought that the fuse would sputter and sizzle slowly like the ones on our baby firecrackers. At any rate, he was completely unprepared for the quick flame and loud hissing, and before he knew it the fuse had burned almost into the firecracker. There wasn't time to put it under water or to scream for help. He simply dropped it on the floor and ran.

It's a blessing that he did, for if he had been in the room when it exploded he might have lost his hand or his eyesight. As it was, he was safely in the hall when the crash came, too paralyzed to open his mouth and yell. The bathroom was small and the door was closed, so the concussion had no place to go except the window and walls. It broke out the window, of course, and tore great pieces of plaster from the walls. This made the cloud of smoke and dust that poured into the living room and put the finishing touches on me.

Frederick didn't know which he feared the most: to have the folks come home and see the destruction in the bathroom, or to have Howard return and find that his giant firecracker no longer was in existence. I'm ashamed to say that I didn't know much about charity in those days, and I didn't lighten his anguish any by assuring him that everything would be all right. It seems to me that I spent an hour raking him over the coals and saying "Just wait and see what happens when the folks get home!"



Mother and Margery in 1928.

Poor Frederick! He was in such a state by the time the folks did return that there was nothing further to be said on the subject. I believe that the main emphasis was on the fact that he had come through it unharmed, and even Howard was unwontedly forgiving when he heard the story. I imagine that Dad had his own sensations when he saw that the bathroom would have to be replastered and the window replaced, but he didn't dwell on this unhappy aspect of the case. After all, it wasn't the type of thing that you can get too fierce about for it had never happened before and when in the world would it ever happen again?

Well, that's the story of Frederick and his run-in with the giant firecracker, and I couldn't resist telling you about it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Big families and dogs practically go together it seems, yet for a number of reasons (principally the fact that Dad felt our household didn't need any added complications!) we were without one for years. I can't remember any scenes when we pleaded for a dog and the answer was a flat no. It just seems to have been one of those things that are taken entirely for granted—we didn't need a dog.

But one hot summer day in 1926 a medium-sized black-and-white dog came walking up our alley. When he reached our back yard he turned in, looked around at the gang of children playing about him, put his head on his paws and settled himself down. That was the way Trix came to us. And he was something like the famous guests who are invited to dinner and stay for weeks, because he lived with us for a good twelve years and became a pillar of the family.

Trix was an absurd name for him, and no one ever knew just how he happened to be called that, for somehow you associate the name with a little, frisky dog—and Trix was the exact opposite. A more dignified, de-

pendable and less frisky animal never drew the breath of life. He lived with us twelve years, as I've said, and there was never a moment of his time with us when he permitted anyone to make him look ridiculous. As long as he had the power to snap he snapped, and without a second's hesitation if anyone took advantage of him. There was a dog who meant business!

The tales about old Trix are countless and legendary. Somehow he seemed to be Frederick's particular pet, and when anything went wrong (as it frequently did) it was Frederick who had to do the explaining and apologizing. He was Driftmier's dog nine-tenths of the time, but the tenth time he was Frederick's dog and many were the bitter hours spent by his master making atonement.

What breed of dog was Trix? Well, you would have to name over almost every breed of commonly known dog to arrive at the answer. He had a dash of everything in him. Frederick had moments when he said with wistful pride that he was surely fifty percent Newfoundland, but the rest of us suspected that he was more accurately fifty percent wolf. We felt particularly certain of this when he disappeared at certain times of the moon and stayed away for four and five nights at a time.

The first year that we had him he stayed strictly outside—not one foot did he set inside the house. After every meal Frederick gathered up the scraps and fixed his pan near the garage, and during the summer he spent a lot of time keeping his water pan filled to the brim, but it was understood clearly that he need never show his face in the house. And he didn't until Dad spent two weeks alone while the rest of us were in Minnesota on a vacation. When we drove up in front of the house on the evening of our return we saw Dad sitting in the porch swing with Trix lying at his feet. Nothing was said about it, but from that point on he had the run of the house—and years later Dad did confess that Trix had made the place seem less empty and lonely while we were all away.

Yet if Trix had finally gained entrance to the house and tacit permission to hang around, he also knew that there were boundaries set by Dad which he could not cross. Lying on the davenport was one of them. If Dad were safely down town Trix would come in, stretch out on the davenport and take a good nap. Incidentally, he had the peculiar and very funny habit of lying on his back with all four feet up in the air and his head on an old cushion that Frederick provided for just such times. Yet he knew our car and could hear it coming a good block away, and just let the sound of that car penetrate the air and he would lift up his head (not turning over, you understand, but just lifting his head as a person would), look out the front door which was in direct line with the davenport, and get off and move briskly away. Of course this was only if Dad were in the car. Otherwise he stayed comfortably where he was.

Trix' great virtue was his loyalty. In his younger days he showed some



discretion about it, but as he grew older and more sullen he took issue with everyone and everything that seemed to be hindering us in any way. More than one person had the unhappy experience of having Trix reach out and snap at an ankle for no reason at all that we could see, and no one would dream of coming up on our front porch at night if he were lying anywhere near. As someone once said about him, "Driftmiers never need to lock a door—they've got a combination machine-gun and lion in their yard." I really believe that Trix would have killed anyone who deliberately set out to molest us. His great mission in life was to protect us, and he did a masterful job of it.

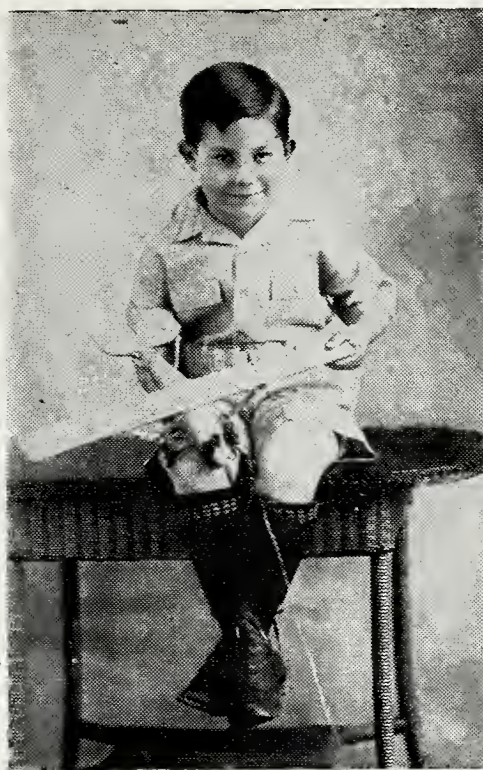
Of course he had enemies and they were legion. He was too smart to eat poisoned meat, but he was not fast enough to get beyond the reach of a gun. Someone shot him one night, and the next morning we found him lying near the back steps blood-soaked and obviously dying. We were so appalled that we stood by paralyzed while he summoned his last strength to get into the kitchen and down the basement steps. Then we realized what the whole story was and took action. This meant making a litter and carrying him right back up the steps and outdoors—Dad, Howard and Frederick carried the litter. Then Frederick sat down on the old pump platform and began fanning him. It was a hot day and he fanned and fanned; then he organized shifts to do the fanning, and finally when dinner time came Trix was still alive and Frederick was still fanning.

"You'll have to come in and eat," Dad said. "He won't die while you're in here."

Frederick wiped away his tears (he had cried all morning as he fanned) and came in to eat. And lo! and behold! in fifteen minutes Trix walked right through the back door, seemingly recovered, and indicated that he wanted dinner too. An hour later he was as good as new, and you could never make any of us believe that he hadn't just pretended to be so sick to get a morning's fanning.

While he was still young he went down town every day, and then got on the running board of Dad's car to ride home with him. Once he followed Frederick to town and lay down outside a jewelry store to wait for him. Frederick had forgotten that he was with him and left by the back door, so it was a very irate jeweler who called a half-hour later to ask us to come down and get our dog—he hadn't permitted a single customer to enter the store!

After Mother was hurt he never left her wheel-chair. He stayed right by her side from morning until night, and if any strangers called he growled threateningly until she assured him that it was all right. As long as he was able to move he was beside her. That was why Mother found it so hard to do anything about it when the time came that life was a misery to him and the only kindly thing was to remove him from his suffering.



Donald and his much prized airplane in 1926.

Three different times she went with Dad to deliver him to the veterinarian. And three different times she gave up and went back to get him. The last time, with Frederick's permission written from far away, Donald delivered him. We all knew that it was best, but it seemed like betraying the most loyal dog in the world.

After Trix was no longer with us we had Rusty, a cocker spaniel with a fancy pedigree who belonged definitely to Mother. We liked Rusty and he was with us for a good eight years or so, but somewhere in the back of our minds there was always a lonely feeling for old Trix.

In the late summer of 1927 there was a genuine flurry of excitement at our house for we were going on a vacation, a real out-of-town vacation—and vacations were something that Driftmiers didn't take. One moment of reflection on what it would cost to travel with six or seven children, plus adults, is an adequate explanation for the fact that we sometimes spent a day here or a day there, but that we never actually splurged on something that could be called a vacation.

It was family radio friends who made this particular vacation possible. One day a letter came from the Harris family at Twin Lakes, Minnesota, offering us the use of one of their cabins—they had a nice farm on the edge of a lake, and owned several cabins that were equipped for vacationers. It was too long a drive to make in one day, so the invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Job Francis at Storm Lake was accepted with alacrity—they asked us to have Sunday night supper with them and spend the night. This meant that we could pick up the second lap of the trip on the following day.

Dad couldn't get away to go with us, and although he wanted us to have the trip he surely saw us off in an unhappy frame of mind for Mother was at the wheel and Mother, as

we all know, was not the world's best driver. She had never driven that far before and there was no one to alternate spells at the wheel with her, but I'm sure she never doubted for a moment that we'd all return safe and sound.

The sun was shining when we left Shenandoah and everything seemed in perfect order for a wonderful vacation. There was no fighting or quarreling at all for a long, long time in spite of the fact that Dorothy, Frederick, Wayne, Margery and Donald were all cooped up in the back seat together. We had gotten at least one hundred miles along the road before there were violent differences of opinion, and just about the time the first dissension started the sky clouded over and it began to rain.

This was a catastrophe pure and simple. The highway had not yet been hard-surfaced in any way, and the rain meant that Mother had to grapple with the problem of mud. We were a very nervous and quiet crew when she started down long slick hills, and we were even more nervous and quiet when she started up them. Fortunately the mud didn't last for more than thirty or forty miles, and then we were once again back in a lovely summer day with good dry roads.

We reached the Francis home around three in the afternoon and were royally entertained. I can't remember now just how they accommodated such a crowd, but we all had beds and all slept well even though it did storm during the night. The next morning we left about nine for the last part of the drive, and it must have been around five o'clock when we reached the Harris farm.

The week that we spent there was truly a pleasant one. The edge of the lake made a wonderful place for the younger children to play, and I had a good time rowing around in a boat. We had one fish dinner after another, and there was so little washing and ironing done that most of the time we were completely free except for getting meals and cleaning up after them. I've often wondered if Mr. and Mrs. Harris realized how much pleasure they gave us that summer—all of us remember that week with joy.

On the return trip we stopped for a couple of days at Okoboji, and it was there that I had a bout of ptomaine poisoning which the rest of the family escaped. This was a lucky thing for I can't imagine a situation more distracting than having everyone down at once with such a violent ailment as ptomaine.

We drove from Okoboji to Shenandoah in one day, and had our only tire trouble three miles out of town. We were all hot and tired, and it was awfully exasperating to sit there for what seemed an endless time while we waited for the garageman to come out from Shenandoah and change tires. It was a blessing that the tire went flat right there if it had to go flat at all, for Mother couldn't change it and we might have had to call a garage from quite a distance at some other point of the trip.

It was just sunset when we drove



up in front of our house, and Dad was sitting in the porch swing reading the evening paper with Trix lying at his feet. This was the first thing we noticed—that Trix was actually lying near Dad! As I mentioned before, it was during our absence that Dad became reconciled to old Trix and actually welcomed his presence. Our arrival certainly eased Dad's mind considerably for he said that he'd been sitting there for a couple of hours on the proverbial pins and needles waiting for us.

In reviewing the events of that summer I find only one thing that might fall under the heading of a catastrophe, although it was a catastrophe of a very mild nature. Frederick and Wayne had a cold-drink stand at Sleepy Hollow that summer and stayed manfully by their job even though the heat was so intense that a section of the highway only a short distance from them actually blew up. Every morning they drove out with Mother to get their supplies, and didn't close the stand until evening. It was on one of the hottest days that Wayne somehow managed to drive an ice-pick completely through his right hand. This meant tetanus shots, of course, and he wasn't able to do anything with that hand for quite a while. Yet when I think of things that other summers brought it does seem like a minor accident—with apologies to Wayne!

Things jogged along on a pretty even keel through all of the following fall and winter. We had a fine schedule worked out at home that enabled Mother to carry on her radio work, give considerable time to church work, and go to other towns in the interest of Parent-Teachers associations. In the morning we all jumped out of bed the first time we were called (it sounds saintly but it's true!) and had breakfast and then cleaned the kitchen before we went to school. We always had the kitchen cleaned before we went back to school for the afternoon, and the same thing was true at night. Cooking for the nine of us was such a big job that Mother would never have been able to do anything outside if we hadn't pitched in and cooperated.

On Saturdays, of course, the fur really flew! Everyone had his special job in the morning, and Frederick and Wayne developed such talents for cleaning that they can compete with any housewife today. Mother had three radio programs on Saturday, so our day really began at 7:00 when the entire family broadcast the morning worship; Kitchen-Klatter came at 1:30, and then at 3:30 the Children's Hour was broadcast. Margery was the backbone of this program for a long, long time. She had a very sweet voice and was always willing to sing special request numbers. From time to time we still receive letters from old friends who remember that Margery sang such and such a song for them many years ago.

In the spring of 1928 I graduated from the Shenandoah high school and began looking ahead into the future. My choice of colleges was extremely limited by the fact that I could not get around physically with enough



Mother's office looked like this in 1928 when she was in the full swing of her endlessly varied activities. If you knew Mother back in those days your name is probably some-place in those files at the right. She still recalls that she stopped in the middle of making lemon pies to have this picture taken.

ease to manage a large campus with its building that are sometimes far, far apart. I had to attend a school where everything was under one roof, or virtually so, and the best solution to the situation seemed to be the Creston Junior College. Aunt Erna Driftmier was teaching there that year, and my cousin, Hope Field Pawek, lived only a block and a half from school and offered to give us board and room, so these two facts were the final considerations that were responsible for my going to Creston in September, 1928.

Just before school opened in the fall of 1928, one of the funny events took place that has now become part of our collection of family stories along with Frederick's firecracker, and a dozen others as well. This particular story chiefly concerns Wayne (who was nine years old at the time), although practically everyone had a hand in it before it was over.

One evening in early September Mother had a committee meeting at our house, a Ladies Aid committee, if I remember rightly, and the women arrived around seven-thirty to get down to the business of the evening. They sat and visited for a while, and then at eight o'clock when it was time to get to work, Mother sent the younger children to bed. There wasn't much fuss about bed at our house, and all four of them, Frederick, Wayne, Margery and Donald, went trotting upstairs in short order. That was the last of it, everyone thought, but only a few moments later Wayne came to the top of the stairs and called down in a very quavering voice, "Mother, I don't want to go to bed."

This wasn't at all like Wayne, so Mother called back in surprise, "Now go on to bed, Wayne, and let's not hear anymore about it." There was a short silence from the stairs, and

then we heard the sound of Wayne bursting into tears and his repeated statement that he didn't want to go to bed. At this Mother called back, "What in the world is the trouble, Wayne? Why don't you want to go to bed?"

There was a second short silence, and then he sobbed, "There's a skunk under my bed."

To say that this electrified the committee meeting, and all of the rest of us too, for that matter, is a strong understatement. Everyone gasped, blank silence fell (during which we could hear Wayne sniffing), and then Mother rallied to say that there couldn't possibly be a skunk under his bed, and for him to get in there immediately.

Wayne's answer to this was to begin sobbing louder than ever, so Mother turned to Howard who was reading in the dining room, and told him to go up and see what was wrong. When Howard departed the committee drew a long breath and settled down to work again. I'm sure that no one really expected to hear another word about it, so we were thunderstruck when Howard came running down the stairs and said, "Well, there's an animal of some kind under the bed—I can't see if it's a skunk or not."

He went to the basement to get a shovel and when he came back up with it the committee decided that work could wait, and without a word from Howard they all got up from their chairs and moved into a circle near the wall. Dorothy got up on the piano stool, I remember, and Mother opened the front door and cleared a path from the stairs to the porch. Whatever the animal might be, we didn't intend to hamper his progress when he reached the bottom of the stairs.

Howard sent the children downstairs



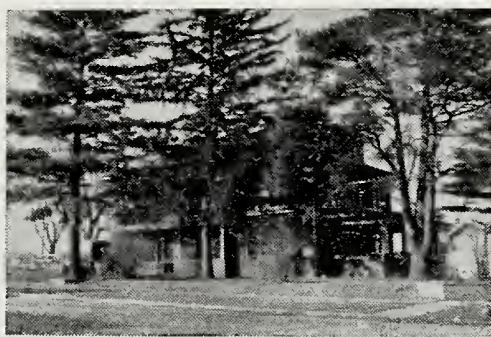
(they were all crying and carrying on by this time) and then called back to be sure that the front door was open. "It may be a skunk," he added, "and we want to get him out in a hurry." You can imagine the suspense while we waited for the crack of the shovel and sounds of battle overhead. We didn't have long to wait, for BANG went the shovel, but then instead of any further sounds of battle there was complete silence. A moment later Howard called sheepishly, "I'm tossing down the animal" and simultaneously Mother's old fox scarf came flying down the stairs. Wayne's "skunk" was vanquished.

What had happened was this: during the afternoon the children had been playing "dress-up" and one of the favorite trappings was Mother's old fox scarf that was far too mangy for the street. Somehow it had been tossed under a far corner of the bed and forgotten, but when the hall light was turned on the rays picked up those glass eyes and they gleamed for all the world like a genuine animal's. Howard later put the scarf back so that we could see for ourselves how he could have been so badly mistaken when he announced that there *was* an animal under the bed and actually went after the shovel. It really was an ominous sight.

This reference to "dressing-up" reminds me that Frederick was the one who put us into stitches periodically with his performances. We would all be sitting in the living room reading or doing our home-work at the dining room table when suddenly Frederick would make his appearance in a wild rig. His favorite outfit was an old bearskin coat that hung to the floor, and with this he wore one of Mother's abandoned hats with a fuschia colored veil that hung down over his face. Under his arm he carried Mother's old banjo (at least two of the strings were missing) and in this get-up he would appear, a deadly serious expression on his face, sit down in a chair and begin his concert. Even if he had laughed the affair would have been terribly funny, but since he never cracked a smile from start to finish the total effect was excruciatingly hilarious.

The only other member of the family who indulged in such wild outfits was Donald. He would wear the craziest things imaginable, not only in the house but out on the street as well. Once he made himself a Daniel Boone outfit from an old sheepskin coat, and for good measure he tacked a long tail to the rear of the coat and wore it everywhere. Donald was the one who made himself wild hats too. Once he cut up an old inner-tube so that a tight band fitted around his head, and all around the band he tacked ten-inch strips of narrow rubber. These hung down like a fly net, and when he came to the table with it on nobody said a word; I remember that he had to reach up and hold aside the strips before he could take each mouthful.

The winter of 1928-29 brought no catastrophes and no illness. I was in school at Creston, but everyone else was at home and when I returned for



It's too bad that we couldn't have a better cut of the house in Clarinda that we left when we went to California, but at least you can see some of the great pines that we enjoyed so much. These are among the oldest trees in Clarinda and are still standing today.

weekend visits it pleased me to see that the fine system we had worked out for dishes, etc., held up nicely even though I wasn't there to act as straw-boss. I noticed too that Frederick and Wayne had improved considerably in their duties and were becoming downright competent at cleaning. They were actually better help than Margery—for some reason we always sort of "babied" her and said, "Oh, run along," if she wanted to do this or that when work was to be done.

We had a lovely Christmas that year, and I can say this in spite of the fact that Dorothy and I both suffered the loss of our one big present. We had spent considerable time working in the room that we shared together (this was in the summer before I went away) and Mother decided that for Christmas we should have the beautiful dressing table lamps that we had admired, longed for, and been unable to buy. Consequently she ordered them, and they arrived at a local store just the day before Christmas. Dad brought them home in the heavy carton and they were unwrapped in the garage, but he decided that it would simplify the last minute job of arranging gifts around the tree if they were in the house. That's why he called Frederick out and told him to sneak them in when Dorothy and I were upstairs.

Well, Frederick sneaked them in all right about four in the afternoon, but when he started down to the basement he somehow stumbled on the top step and fell the entire flight. My, such a groaning and moaning! We were sure that he had been killed and he might very easily have been badly hurt, but the only genuine damage was to the lamps—both of them were smashed into a thousand pieces, and the rose-silk shades were twisted hopelessly out of shape. In other words, they were a total loss. We didn't get our lamps that Christmas, but we were mighty glad that Frederick hadn't broken an arm or leg.

I remember something else about that Christmas too and it was old Trix. We couldn't open our gifts until he'd been brought in, and there under the tree was a fine new dish tied with bright red ribbons, and a package of excellent bones. He also received a new ball and a toy mouse, but these gifts were just a nice idea

because Trix wasn't the kind of a dog who ever condescended to play with a ball or a mouse. However, Frederick's intentions were of the best.

One of the pleasant things that happened in the spring of 1929 was my nineteenth birthday when Mother and Dad drove up from Shenandoah to Creston where I was finishing my freshman year in college. I didn't know that they were coming, and as it was their first visit I was greatly surprised to see them when I returned to the house where I was living after my last class of the day. They had brought with them a beautiful big angel food cake, and a white woolen dress that Mother had somehow found time to make—I don't know how. We went down to the hotel for supper and had a good visit before they had to start back to Shenandoah.

Wrack my brains as I will, I cannot think of anything that stands out in memory during the summer of 1929 or the winter that followed. We were all at home that winter. Dorothy was a junior in high school, Frederick was a freshman, and the rest of the children were scattered down through the grades. I stayed at home that year and did Mother's secretarial work for her, and you'd be surprised how many names I recognize today because I handled Mother's mail seventeen years ago! It's still hard for me to realize that the new babies we heard about then are now seventeen years old and probably finishing high school.

Dorothy and I had a lot of fun making an elaborate wardrobe for Margery's Christmas doll—I do remember that! We made the fanciest doll clothes that I've ever seen, everything from coats trimmed with beaver fur to bathrobes trimmed with white rabbit fur. There were over a dozen dresses made as painstakingly as dresses for a real baby, and we were positive that Margery would be thrilled to death with them.

As a matter of fact, we really spoiled her Christmas for her, but we didn't know it at the time. This doll for which we were sewing had been ordered far in advance of Christmas, and every night after we finished our stitching we carefully put everything away on a top shelf in the pantry. One particular night about two weeks before Christmas we forgot to clean up after we had finished and left the doll, with all of its clothes, lying on the dining room table. It would be the next morning, of course, that Margery chose to get up first, and when she walked into the dining room she saw the doll on the table and went into raptures over it.

A few minutes later when Mother came downstairs she found Margery hugging the doll ecstatically—it was a delicate situation! The worst of it was that Margery was only seven and still believed in Santa Claus, so at one fell stroke Mother had to explain that the doll must be put away until Christmas, and that Dorothy and I were making the clothes. She also told Margery that we would be terribly disappointed if we knew that she had seen the doll and its clothes, so didn't she think that it would be better simply to be surprised on Christmas and not let us guess that she had



known anything about it? Margery was a good little scout. She didn't betray her secret when Christmas actually came, and it wasn't until Dorothy and I were married and gone from home that she told us her part of the story. It had made such a firm impression on her mind that she told us the incident with pride even though she was then almost through college—it was final proof, she said, that she could really keep a secret.

In the summer of 1930 it was decided that I would go to school at Cottey College in Nevada, Missouri, when September rolled around. This girls' school, a junior college, had just come into the control of the P.E.O. Sisterhood and Mother thought that it would be a good place for me to have my second year of college. Furthermore, although the campus was fairly large, all of the buildings were grouped together in such a way that I could manage my classes very easily—and this consideration was always the most important one.

None of us could know that with this decision we were all coming to the definite end of one period of our family life. And I've often thought too about the evening in August when Dad drove up with a big, shiny new car, and of our innocent pleasure in it. Certainly we had no way of knowing that the combination of these two things, my entrance to Cottey College and the new car, were to be jointly responsible for bringing to an end the life that we knew with Mother able-bodied and strong.

August was a busy, busy month for there was much sewing to be done, plus all of the many details that must be looked after when a girl goes away to college. Then too, Mother and Dad were taking their first honest-to-goodness vacation since they'd been married, and their plans called for leaving me at Nevada, Missouri, the first day, and then going on south, possibly as far as New Orleans; they expected to travel back north through the states that lie on the east bank of the Mississippi. They were really thrilled about this trip, understandably enough, for they'd been tied to the same routine year in and year out for a long, long time. All of the children were well, complete plans had been made for their care, and there was a new car for the trip—no, not one fly could be found in the ointment! Furthermore, they were going to have good company on this vacation because Dad's brother, Uncle Bert Driftmier and his wife, Aunt Beulah, were going with them.

At this point in my story I really feel that Mother should pick up the thread of events, everything considered, so I have turned back to March of 1940 in the old file of Kitchen-Klatter where she told the beginning of the story in her own words, and I will continue to let her tell the story until we reach the place where I feel that I can pick it up again.

"Saturday morning, September 6, 1930, we were up before daylight. We had packed the car the night before, so after a cup of coffee on the kitchen table I slipped into the children's rooms and received sleepy goodbye kisses and promises to be good. I as-



This scene of Dad reading and Mother doing some handwork has been duplicated on thousands of evenings throughout many years. It is still their favorite way of spending an evening.

sured them I would be back in a few days and told them to take good care of each other.

"As we drove south on No. 71 that morning the sun was just coming up. We all felt like singing so our voices rang out in 'All the World is Waiting for the Sunrise.' I never hear that song without remembering that perfect morning when we drove along, happily watching the sun rise.

"Beulah and I had packed a real old-fashioned lunch for our first day, for we love picnics, and when we found a shady tourist park between St. Joseph and Kansas City, we stopped and ate our fried chicken, potato salad and the other good things we had fixed. Then on our way again! I had never been in Kansas City, so we drove around and saw the lovely parks and public buildings. Near Kansas City I saw tobacco fields for the first time, and learned that the large barns I thought were for hay, were the tobacco drying sheds. About the middle of the afternoon we reached Nevada and inquired the way to Cottey College. It was not hard to find for we recognized the beautiful campus and college buildings from the pictures we had seen in the literature Lucile had received.

"When we drove into the driveway other cars were parked ahead of us, and girls were busily unloading boxes and baggage. We stayed with Lucile until she had unpacked some of her things, and although it was hard to say goodbye and leave her among strangers, we continued on our journey for we wished to reach Joplin by supper time. (If I seem to be going pretty much into detail, it is because I have been asked to leave nothing out of this part of my story.)"

"I had not realized that Joplin was such a good sized place. We found a nice tourist camp which had a small tourist home in connection with it,

and decided to spend the night there. After we had rented our rooms, unpacked and had supper, we went down to the main business district to do some window shopping. If I had known that this was the last time I would ever go shopping on my two feet, I might have walked a few more blocks and looked in a few more store windows, but perhaps it is just as well that I didn't know it. The next morning we had breakfast in a cafe, and before we left the table I remembered the postal cards I had purchased the night before and wrote messages to the children.

"We were on the road again by eight o'clock for we anticipated a wonderful drive which would take us through the real Ozark country. I did not know that there were such extensive lead mines in that part of the country or that the scenery was really so beautiful. When a winding road finally reached the crest of a hill we would stop and enjoy the landscape, beautiful rolling hills reaching as far as the eye could see. Rocky ledges hung over the side of the highway, and tumbling streams, the water clear and sparkling, ran along the other side. We took a number of pictures but in the excitement of what happened that day the kodak was lost.

"When we arrived at Rogers, Arkansas we stopped at a filling station to get gas and asked the attendant if he could direct us to the home of Mr. Winkleman, a nurseryman whom we had met in Shenandoah several times. This boy was new in Rogers and didn't know where our friend lived, so we decided to drive on and stop on our way back.

"If we had known what was to happen within the next half-hour I am sure we would have made further inquiry about Mr. Winkleman for it was between Rogers and Springdale, the



next town, that we had the serious wreck which was to change our lives from that day on. Isn't it strange how small, unimportant things sometimes play a big part in our lives?

"Even to this day I am frightened a little when I see a car driving on to the highway from a side road, for as we neared a cross road a car drove into the highway a short distance in front of us, turned, and then came towards us. At almost the same time a car came over the hill traveling at a very high rate of speed. Mr. Driftmier pulled over as far as he could to the side of the road to make room for the swiftly approaching car to pass safely between us and the car that had entered from the side road. The driver must have lost her head, or else she lost control of her car, for it struck us head on with a terrible impact.

"My husband is such a careful driver that I had never paid any attention to what he does behind the wheel, so Beulah and I weren't watching the road and probably were talking about our housekeeping problems as we sat together in the back seat. That was the last we knew for a while because we were thrown to the floor of the car by the impact and both lost consciousness.

"As I came to, I heard my husband and his brother talking to us. Beulah was badly hurt and I remember realizing that she must be very seriously injured because she was totally unconscious when they carried her to the side of the road. The minute they tried to move me I realized also that I was seriously hurt for my limbs were paralyzed and my back gave me great pain. In fact, I remember saying to my husband as he tried to move me, "Mart, I know that my back is broken."

"We didn't know in those days that people with broken bones, particularly spinal injuries, should never be moved until professional hands can care for them, so of course it was only natural that the first people who stopped should assist in moving me from the wreckage. They made a bed of the car cushions and I was carried to a shady spot near the filling station at the side of the road. All of these details are pretty badly blurred in my memory, but I do recall lying there thinking that our wonderful trip was all over.

"Someone telephoned to Springdale and Rogers, and before long two ambulances and doctors had arrived. We seemed to be just about halfway between the two towns, so one of the ambulances took our party of four to the hospital in Springdale. This was a private hospital above a store building and was owned by one of the doctors who had been called. All eight people involved in the accident, four from our car and four from the other car, were taken to this hospital.

"Mr. Driftmier's brother was the least badly hurt of our crowd although he did suffer some painful cuts and bruises. His wife had a broken foot, broken jaw, many bad cuts and what looked like a brain concussion. Mart had several broken ribs and a severely cut left hand, while I had a broken back and many facial lacerations. All in all, we were



Our car was pulled home behind a truck.

a badly damaged crowd. Certainly we suffered far more than the people in the other car since they were all able to continue on their way that same day.

"It was about noon when we arrived at the hospital, and since it was a small town the word quickly got around that there had been a bad accident to a party of tourists. From about one o'clock on there was a constant stream of people calling to inquire about the injured folks, and many of them brought flowers and offered their services in every possible way. Some of these people corresponded with us for several months, and I've always felt that their concern was truly remarkable since we were total strangers to them.

"After my husband had recovered enough from shock to telephone he called my sister, Helen Fischer, and told her about the accident. He also asked her to talk to our family physician and get his advice as to what should be done. Mart realized that further steps would have to be taken at once since the hospital was far too small to handle a serious back injury. Our family doctor called back immediately with the advice that I should be taken to St. Luke's hospital in Kansas City just as soon as possible, and he said that he would contact a fine orthopedic surgeon and make arrangements for our arrival at St. Luke's.

"It would have been nice if I could have started this trip at once, but Springdale was such a small town that only one train a day came through that could take us. Consequently it was the next evening before we could leave for Kansas City. The Springdale doctor had a stretcher on wheels and this was my bed on the trip to Kansas City. I was rolled right into the baggage car, and Mr. Driftmier and the doctor rode with me. Bert and Beulah stayed on in the Springdale hospital until they had recovered sufficiently to make the return trip home, and on this trip they stopped in Kansas City to visit me at St. Luke's.

"We arrived in Kansas City about 8:30 the following morning where we were met by an ambulance, and in a short time were at St. Luke's. I was taken at once to the X-ray room, and it wasn't long until the plates had been developed and we knew that the 12th dorsal vertebra was crushed. I didn't know much about spinal injuries, but I did know enough to realize that this meant weeks and weeks in the hospital."

\* \* \* \* \*

We heard about Mother's accident in different ways, all of them hard, for no news of this kind can ever be broken painlessly. All of the children, with the exception of myself, heard it on Monday morning just after breakfast. Dad had talked with Aunt Helen on Sunday evening about nine, but there was no question of telling the children at such an hour and Aunt Helen decided to wait until morning. She must have had a sleepless night turning over and over in her mind what would be the best thing to say.

And then, ironically enough, just as she was getting ready to go up to our house her telephone rang and it was Dorothy in a dreadfully upset condition. It seems that Uncle Henry Field didn't know that the children had not yet been told about the accident, and when he came on with his morning broadcast he gave the news of what had happened. The children were listening to the radio when this shocking news came over, and of course they were beside themselves and called Aunt Helen instantly. She went up at once and tried to reassure them that Mother wasn't going to die in spite of what they had heard, but even small children are never deceived where their mothers are concerned. They all understood only too well that Mother had been terribly injured and might not recover.

I heard the news on Tuesday afternoon at Cottey College. No one had called the school because it was assumed that I would have no way of knowing and bad news can always wait, but it so happened that the president of the college read an account of the accident in the Kansas City Star and called St. Luke's hospital at once to be sure that it was the same family.

I was in my room studying when she called to talk with me. You always expect trouble of the most serious kind when the president comes to you rather than summoning you to her, and I tried quickly to figure out what I could possibly have done that shouldn't have been done. When she told me why she was there I was terribly shocked, and my only thought was to get to Kansas City immediately. This was arranged without delay, although I have no memory of how I made the trip or with whom. I remember only that from the time I arrived at the hospital until I left there was nothing but a succession of shocks.

Dad's appearance frightened me when I met him in the lobby of the hospital. He could scarcely get around he was in such bad shape, his hand was heavily bandaged, and he looked a hundred years older. Until I talked with him I hadn't allowed myself to think beyond the fact that Mother was critically injured, but after our conversation I had to face the reality that she had a fifty-fifty chance to recover; and that in all probability she would never walk again.

Bad as this was, it wasn't as bad as walking into the room and seeing Mother on the spinal fracture bed. Those of you who have seen the victims of terrible automobile accidents know what a shock it is; you cannot really believe it at first for it seems



only a moment ago that they were their usual able-bodied selves, and then suddenly here they are, almost unrecognizable. I tried to be cheerful the few minutes that I was allowed in her room, but something about the two nurses on duty really frightened me for underneath their non-committal exteriors they seemed to confirm everything that I feared. It was with the heaviest heart I've ever known that I left her room, and I wasn't alone with this impression for everyone who saw Mother those first days felt that her chances were considerably less than fifty-fifty.

As word of the accident spread, a literal avalanche of assistance was offered. Telegrams and letters by the score poured into the hospital; the telephone at home rang constantly, and friends who felt that they wanted to show their sympathy in some way turned up at the house with all kinds of cakes and cookies and roasts. Mother's room was practically a floral store because of the many flowers, and there were all kinds of gifts. Friends in the Kansas City area who had listened to Mother on the radio called at the hospital to offer their sympathy and help, and a number of weeks later when she was able to have callers, scarcely a day passed without someone taking the time to go and see her. She has always said that thanks to these good friends it didn't seem like a strange hospital in a strange city. That's one more reason, in the long list of reasons, that our family has always been grateful to these friends whom we have not met in person.

Mother spent the first six weeks of her four months in the hospital in the spinal-fracture bed; this particular bed may accomplish wonders, but it's an instrument that would do credit to an ancient torture dungeon. It had a crank on one side halfway between the head and the foot, and every day the doctor elevated the center of the bed by giving the crank a few turns. After a few days of this Mother's head and feet were about fourteen inches lower than the middle of her body, and this meant swallowing up-hill! There are no words to describe what life is like on a spinal-fracture bed. After six weeks of this a cast was made, and then six more weeks were spent in it. The cast was bad, goodness knows, but it was practically paradise compared to the bed.

As soon as the cast period was over, braces were made for her back and legs so that when she became strong enough she could walk on crutches. It had been hoped that Thanksgiving would see Mother at home again, but the doctors couldn't release her at that time so I went up from college and we had Thanksgiving dinner together. This was a comparatively happy time, everything considered, for it began to look as though Mother might really walk again. The fact that it would probably always be on crutches didn't really worry us, for when you've come that close to losing someone all other considerations fade away.

One of the nicest things about belonging to a radio family was the fact that Mother could listen to Aunt

Helen every day and get a daily report on her family. Then on Saturdays the children would go to the studio and sing for her. Mother says that she always bore up well during these times except when Margery sang, "God Will Take Care Of You", and the combination of the words and that sweet little voice coming over the radio just for Mother, always proved to be too much.

Of course the long weeks dragged out endlessly, but many things helped to make them pass a little more swiftly. The daily mail was a great comfort, and the desk clerk told Mother one day that she received more mail in twenty-four hours than all the rest of the hospital put together! It took many bushel baskets to move it from the hospital when the time came to go home. Those countless letters were final proof that Mother's radio friends hadn't forgotten her just because they couldn't hear her everyday.

At last the doctors promised that Mother could go home the day before Christmas. My school was out a week earlier, so I stopped in Kansas City to visit with her and then went on home to help get things ready. It was the single most exciting week that I can ever remember, and years later I wrote a short story about our final preparations on the day before Christmas. That story was written in tears, literally, and I understand there are actually members of our family who've not gotten completely through it to this day!

I was very happy when *The Woman's Home Companion* published it, and I was also gratified later when it was included in both a Braille anthology of short stories and an English anthology of modern American short stories. *The Woman's Home Companion* has given us permission to reprint this, so for those of you who missed it when it appeared originally, here it is.



## THE WELCOME

*By Lucile Driftmier Verness*

(Reprinted from *Woman's Home Companion*)

Toward evening Wayne got out the road map again and we looked carefully at the straight red line between Kansas City and Saint Joseph. With his short brown fingers he traced it slowly and when Frederick said, "It's almost six o'clock now," we could see that they must be some place near the end of that red line.

I began walking around the rooms putting on the last finishing touches. We had ordered a dozen red roses from the florist and Margery worked all afternoon polishing the beautiful copper vase that Mother bought years ago when she was teaching school in California. I had her work at the kitchen table and every time I flew out to look at the chickens she turned

it back and forth and showed me the places that gleamed like August suns. The roses were in it now and they stood with their sculptured red heads drooping over the songbook.

"Shall we turn on the lamps and light the candles?" Dorothy asked, "or do you think we should wait until just before they get home?"

"Let's turn them on now," Frederick said going over to the Christmas tree and putting his hand under the prickly green branches to find the connection. Instantly the great golden star sprang into bloom high on the top branch and cascading down in the sweet fragrant pine were the gay red Santa Clauses and brilliant flowers that we had found packed carefully away in cotton from the Christmas before.

"Do you think Mother will like this blue light so close to the green one?" he asked. "Do you remember last year she told us to be careful about getting some of those colors too close together?"

"She'll like this very much," Margery said patting the tiny round stomach of a Santa Claus. "and she'll think there are some fine branches to tie on suet and bread crusts afterward."

"We'll put the tree just outside her window," I said, "and she can see the birds from her bed."

"She'll like that," Dorothy said and her eyes were bright with tears.

I walked over to the windows and looked down the long white hill. The sun was setting now. There were delicate fans of rosy pink spread across the sky and in all of the little hollows that looked secret and lonely, pale purple shadows were settling. From where I stood I could see the gentle round slope where all of us had coasted last winter. We had run up and down with our old dog prancing and nipping at the sled runners and Mother had wrapped her bright red scarf over her ears and gone down with us.

A car turned the corner and my heart sprang to attention. In an hour they will be here, I said to myself. In an hour the ambulance lights will flash through that long arch of trees and they will be here at last.

"You'd better come and look at these chickens again," Emma said from the kitchen door. "I think we'd better turn the fire down or those legs will get too brown."

She opened the oven door and we crowded closer around her. There were the plump glistening chickens snuggled up to each other in little piles of white steaming rice, with their wings touching affectionately and their four fat legs crossed modestly. I took a fork and poked one very gently. Shining steams of rich juice poured out of the tight skin and ran down into the pan.

"Um . . ." we breathed.

"I thought we'd put them on the platter and let your mother see them before they're carved," Emma said proudly. "What time do you reckon they'll come?"

"They should be here in an hour." I said glancing at the kitchen clock. "Dad thought they would leave Saint



Joseph by six and then it only takes an hour."

"But they won't drive fast," Frederick put in. "They won't want to joggle her or hit any bumps, so it'll take longer."

"Not much longer, though, because Mother knows we're waiting and she'll want to hurry as fast as she can."

I looked at the table again. Dorothy and Margery and I had started fixing it at three o'clock because we wanted everything just right and it had taken us over an hour because all of us were so fussy. Margery even got cotton to shine the goblets and Dorothy measured the exact place for every piece of silver with a little ruler.

I flicked the tiniest speck of lint from the side of one goblet and touched the end of a spoon with a napkin to take off the faintest fingerprint. There were short crimson candles on each side of the flaming poinsettia and the place cards that Margery had made were standing jauntily in front of every plate.

"What shall I do about Mother's?" she had asked holding the lettering pen above the square of cardboard. "We could give it to her on her tray, couldn't we, even though everyone knows it's her place. She'd think that was fun, wouldn't she?"

"What do you suppose Mother will notice first when they wheel her in?" Dorothy asked. "The tree or the table?"

"She'll notice the tree first of course," Frederick said, who had worked all morning fixing a bucket of sand to stand it in, and bracing the supports just right. "And after the tree she'll see the creche that Wayne made and then she'll see the table."

I walked around the house anxiously. In some ways this last hour of waiting was harder than all of the hard hours since that Sunday morning in September when it had happened. With that agonized flash of memory I could see again how it must have been, how they must have driven along joyful and happy through the softness of the Indian summer morning, how they must have looked for one shocked moment at the thundering car that struck them.

We had been eating breakfast the next day when Emma brought in the telegram. We wept. Each of us had gone off in desolate sorrow trying to imagine what it would mean if Mother never walked again. Later I found Frederick lying under the spirea bushes by the pool with his head buried in our old dog's furry coat. "I keep thinking," he sobbed, "how she was going to rake leaves with us for our picnics."

I looked around the big hushed rooms. Wayne had lighted the candles. Their steady yellow flames made little pools of pale gold in the gleaming piano. One drop of water hung in a silver ball at the end of a rose petal. The golden pools and the silver ball were waiting.

"Is there anything left to do?" I asked when Emma came to the dining-room door.

"Nothing," she said. "The pudding is ready and the chickens are done

and I've got the fruit cocktail chilling in the icebox. Do you reckon anything's held them up? I hate to think of them chickens waiting much longer." She cocked her head anxiously toward the kitchen and sniffed critically at the indescribably wonderful odor. We all turned and sniffed too.

"It's a good smell to walk into, isn't it?" Margery said taking her handkerchief and rubbing the copper vase once again.

"Listen, what do you suppose is in there?" She pointed to the small blue-starred box tied with an impudent blue bow that fairly shouted to be opened.

"No fair peeking," Frederick reminded her when she picked it up and began shaking it hopefully. "The card says, 'For Mother,' and she wouldn't like it if we got into things ahead of time."

"But I don't have anything to do," Margery sighed roaming around the room impatiently. "I don't think they'll ever get home."

We had started dressing at noon and for two hours there had been great splashings and running about to find socks and petticoats and neckties.

"This is like it was before Mother got hurt, isn't it?" Dorothy said cheerfully, brushing her teeth in the steamy bathroom. "This is the way we always got ready all together on Sunday morning except that everyone had his clothes in a separate stack before we started. Do you remember the time someone asked Mother if she had us trained to sit in stairsteps at church?"

"That was old Mrs. Burwell," I said. "One time she looked at my front teeth when I was little and said, 'Land, land, child, you're going far away from home! That big space between your front teeth means that you'll go a long ways when you grow up.' And I cried myself to sleep for weeks because I didn't want to leave Mother and the family and go away."

I remembered this now when Dorothy came over to the piano where I sat teetering on the edge of the bench and said, "Why don't we sing some Christmas songs while we're waiting? First let's do It Came Upon the Midnight Clear."

I began playing. Only Dorothy sang at the beginning, but before we'd got through the first verse everyone else came over to the piano and began singing too.

I glanced up at their faces. In all their eyes was the steady courage and hope that each of them had drawn from some deep source to meet this homecoming.

*Peace on the earth, good-will to men  
From heaven's all-gracious King*

I am the oldest, I thought, and I have less faith than any of them.

We had finished all of the verses of the first song and started on O Little Town of Bethlehem when the lights of a car flashed.

"They're here!" Emma said starting toward the door and then stopping abruptly. "Now listen," she said firmly, "you don't want to go tearing out in the cold and upset your mother, do you? Tell them to set down, Lucile,

until they bring her in."

"Sit down," I said quietly.

We all sat down in a row, Dorothy next to me, and then Frederick and Margery and Wayne.

*She went away tall and strong, my heart cried. She walked out to the car waving gaily to us.*

They were almost to the steps now. Then we saw the long cot roll into the living-room.

"Mother!" we cried.

She raised her head and smiled. "Merry Christmas!" she cried.

"Mother!" we cried again, smiling at her through our tears.

*"Mother, Mother, Mother . . ."*

"You have such a beautiful tree," she said. "I hoped it would look like this."

Then all of us were bending over the cot laughing and crying.

"Merry, merry Christmas!" everyone cried at once, the strangeness and sadness gone like magic.

"Who fixed that?" Mother asked, pointing to her picture framed with sprays of evergreen.

"Dorothy did," someone said. "We put it up to keep from quarreling when we knew that you wouldn't be home for a long time."

"But I'm home now," she said gaily, washing away the terrible months at the hospital with a wave of her hand, "and I'm sure with my family to love me I'll get well fast; you can help me learn to walk again too. I won't need crutches long with so many shoulders to lean on. Why don't we sing?"

I sat down at the piano and turned to Silent Night. Every Christmas just before our tree we had turned off all the lights and sung it very softly. "Christmas is love!" Mother exclaimed once as we finished the last "Sleep in heavenly peace."

I struck the first notes. My mother's voice, firm and clear, started, then everybody joined in.

*All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon Virgin, mother and child,  
Holy infant so tender and mild*

Once again I felt the deep glowing bonds of love between us, felt the ageless triumph of love that breaks down the prisons of death, illness and suffering.

I turned to look at my mother. She smiled at me gravely, tenderly.

*Sleep in heavenly peace.*

\* \* \* \* \*

With Mother at home again everything seemed curiously mixed—in one sense of the word we had returned to a normal pattern just because she was there, and in another sense we had embarked upon an unfamiliar pattern because she was confined to her bed and unable to resume the life that we had known in the past. It is difficult to explain, and so I suppose that only those of you who have had similar experiences can fully understand it.

That particular Christmas was the only time we left our packages to open on Christmas morning—we've always been a family who opened gifts on Christmas Eve. But the trip home from Kansas City and the excitement



of seeing the family strained Mother's small reserve of strength and she went to bed as soon as we had eaten dinner—yes, it was dinner that night and not a humdrum supper!

Christmas morning we had a lovely breakfast and then we opened our gifts. By nine o'clock the telephone began ringing and it's the literal truth that it rang all day long! Countless friends called to wish us a "Happy Christmas" and to speak to Mother once again. Between local calls the operators tried to sandwich in long-distance calls from relatives near and far who were thinking of us on that day.

After dinner the seedhouse called and asked Mother if she would be able to say just a few words on the Kitchen-Klatter program. Gertrude Hayzlett, our faithful friend, had been broadcasting the program daily while Mother was in Kansas City, so Kitchen-Klatter had been going right on. She had announced the day before that if it were at all possible Mother would speak a few words, and consequently there were many people waiting eagerly to hear her voice again.

About twelve-thirty the engineer came up from the radio department and brought a microphone. This was the first time we had ever had a microphone in the house, and none of us realized then that in the years to come it would be as much a part of our household equipment as the stove or refrigerator! This microphone was installed in Mother's bedroom, the room that had formerly been her office. It was the only space on the ground floor that could be utilized for a bedroom, and of course she didn't want to be 'way off upstairs where she couldn't keep an eye and an ear on the family.

When the signal came for Mother to say a few words she started out bravely enough with a wish that each and everyone of her listeners might be having a merry Christmas, but this was just about all she was able to say. "It wasn't that I didn't have the strength to speak," she explained to us later, "but when I suddenly realized that these were the friends who had written so faithfully while I was in the hospital and who had gone to great pains to help make those months less difficult, I was just overwhelmed!"

We knew how she felt for we had had the same sensations when we saw the big boxes of mail that came back with her from Kansas City. Then too, there were boxes of Christmas cards at the house that we had been receiving all week before her return, and we had saved them until Christmas afternoon when she could start opening them quietly after the worst of the excitement of homecoming had died down.

These were the boxes that we brought into her room as soon as the broadcast was over. Dad put the first box on a chair by her bed where she could reach it easily, and then she began going through the cards and letters enjoying each and every word. We remember all of this very clearly even though sixteen years have passed, and evidently those of you who were



Mother and Dad went down to the seedhouse in the summer of 1931 to participate in the annual watermelon feast.

our friends at that time remember the Christmas broadcast too because I don't believe that a week passes without at least one of you referring to it.

Life settled back into something resembling normality after New Year's day. Mother had a good nurse who arrived with her on Christmas Eve and who stayed with us for four or five months. There was a housekeeper also because I had to return to college the first week in January and of course there had to be someone who could manage the cooking and cleaning and laundry for such a big houseful of people.

All of Mother's strength was concentrated on trying to regain her health. Every morning she had massages to strengthen the muscles in her legs, and she said that every night she tried to go to sleep feeling that she had gained something over the previous day. Even the slightest gain represented a triumph for the long months in the hospital, particularly the six weeks on the spinal fracture bed, had left her with so little strength.

The problem of devising the right kind of exercise to help a victim of spinal injuries is always a difficult one, for somehow all of the nerves and muscles must be reeducated again and the smallest, most simple things must be learned from scratch. If any program of exercise could be started immediately it would make a great difference, but in Mother's case, and in practically any case even remotely comparable, exercise is begun when the patient has lost virtually all of his strength because of the long, long time spent in bed. By the time Mother was finally able to embark upon a

campaign that we hoped would lead to her walking again, she had just about the amount of strength that it took to be helped from her bed to the wheelchair. And none of us truly believed that she would progress beyond this.

But we made the mistake that loving families so often make—we underestimated Mother's capacity to wage a battle. Because what she did looked so terribly difficult to us we could scarcely believe that she would persist day in and day out, week in and week out. I think that all of us decided in our own minds that if WE were the one we would just give up the struggle and call it quits. I stress all of this for a very good reason: it is the turning point for victims of severe spinal injuries. Many people have sufficient will to live to get them through the long hospitalization—they have a definite goal to work towards—they want to be HOME again.

However, once their goal has been achieved and they are home and life has more or less gotten back to normal, the extra effort to progress beyond the wheelchair and bed is too much for their shattered morale and strength. No one warned Mother that this was the critical point for none of us had had any experience with such situations, but she evidently knew instinctively that what she accomplished in the next two or three months would determine the course of the future. I realize now that this was what made her tackle the bicycle even though it took superhuman effort.

Every morning at ten o'clock, immediately following the visit of the doctor who gave daily massages, this bicycle, in a substantial frame, was brought in to the kitchen. Then Dad, the nurse and the doctor, got Mother from the wheelchair to the bicycle. At first she could only sit for a couple of minutes even with considerable support, and her feet had to be strapped to the pedals. It took quite a while for her to be able to revolve the pedals even once, but even though it seemed so discouraging at the beginning, she persisted and eventually the day came when she could sit on the bicycle without support of any kind and spin the wheels for twenty minutes or longer. It has taken only a few minutes to write this, but it took many weeks for Mother to reach this stage of her progress.

She has always felt that the bicycle did more than any other one single thing to help her recovery. And I know that in these past sixteen years she has written countless letters to people who have inquired as to the methods she used, and suggested the bicycle treatment to them.

In the latter part of May a trip to Kansas City was made to see Mother's doctors and they expressed themselves as highly pleased with her progress. By this time she could stand on crutches, although she couldn't take a step, and so new braces were designed to carry her through the next phase of her recovery. I met the folks at the Kansas City hospital and I've never forgotten what a start it gave me to see Mother actually standing on her own two feet again—it gave me a great thrill.



At this time I was winding up my year at Cottey College, and the trip to Kansas City was made under circumstances which I had never experienced before and certainly have never experienced since. Two members of the school's faculty, both young women in their early twenties, had purchased an old stripped-down Model-T for about \$20.00, and the words "stripped-down" do not constitute an understatement for it was the most decrepit car I have ever seen. Well do I remember that there were no floor-boards or doors whatsoever—just a couple of planks had been placed where the floor-boards should have been. They had owned it only a few days when two things happened at the same time: the brakes gave 'way completely, and one of the owners suffered a broken foot and had to get about on crutches.

It was these crutches that served as brakes for the car. It never achieved a speed beyond twenty miles an hour so it was simple to lean on the crutch when we wanted to stop. It scarcely seems necessary to say that this car stayed strictly on small country roads, and many a hilarious outing we had during the spring months when we packed picnics and went out. When it came time to leave Cottey for the year the owners of the car decided to drive it to Holton, Kansas, by way of Kansas City, so that was how it happened that four of us drove away from Nevada early in the morning with our luggage piled high around us. Oh yes, I shouldn't neglect mentioning that the brakes had actually been repaired before we started—we didn't brave the highway or Kansas City traffic with only a crutch.

Our only car trouble arose from the radiator—it sprang a leak, a fresh leak, to be specific, for there were many at all times—and as a consequence we had to stop not only at every single filling station and garage between Nevada and Kansas City, but also at every stream we crossed. An old bucket was carried for this specific purpose, and automatically someone got out every time we spotted water and filled the radiator. It ran out almost as fast as we poured it in.

In this derelict car I arrived at the impressive front entrance of St. Luke's hospital about five in the afternoon. We had been on the road since five that morning—imagine it, twelve hours to cover about one-hundred and thirty miles! Such a trip would constitute sheer torture now, but when we're young we think the rougher the trip, the more the fun. And I must confess too that I thought Dad was simply being stodgy and a kill-joy when he expressed no enthusiasm for our car or the wonderful trip we had made in it. Now, of course, I would be stricken speechless if I saw my daughter disembark from such a ruin!

It was plain to be seen that Mother was in fine spirits. She had had a busy and truly happy five months since I had last seen her, and she seemed like an altogether different person in many ways. There were small mountains of clothing waiting for her needle and, much more im-



Dad had heavy steel pipes mounted in concrete at exactly the right height for Mother to walk between. This was a wonderful way to learn to walk again.

portant than any amount of mending, was the fact that the children needed direction and guidance with their school work. Everything that Mother always did as regularly as the sun rose came to an abrupt halt when she was injured, so I think that it was the wonderful feeling of being desperately needed that helped her to make the great effort to get well.

Dorothy graduated from high school that spring, and her graduation was the only one Mother missed. Our auditorium is on the third floor, and it was humanly impossible to negotiate three long flights of stairs. That was why she also missed the senior operetta and play in which Dorothy had parts, but Mother says that she vividly recalls entire sections of those performances because she went over Dorothy's lines with her at home so many, many times.

As the summer of 1931 drew to a close our house was a very busy place for both Dorothy and I were planning to go away. Dorothy's plans called for entering the Nebraska State Teachers College at Chadron, and I was anticipating a trip to Wyoming that would last for several months.

Chadron lies in the northwestern corner of Nebraska and Dorothy's reason for going there lay in the fact that our former next-door neighbors, the Howard Alexanders, were making it their home. Mrs. Alexander wanted very much to have Dorothy with her because she was alone a great deal with her two little girls, Mona and Mary Ellen, while Mr. Alexander traveled as a salesman. We knew the Alexanders so well through the years we lived side by side that it was quite a wrench to us when they left Shenandoah at just about the time Moth-

er was injured. We didn't see them again until the summer of the following year, but at that time they were in town for a brief visit and the plans concerning Dorothy were made.

My trip to Wyoming came about because of a tragic accident that befell one of my dearest friends. Elizabeth and I lived across the hall from each other at Cottey College, and when I told her goodbye early one morning I didn't dream that I would see her again so soon and under such sad circumstances. She joined her sister, Miriam, in Lincoln and they were driving to Omaha to take a train to their home in Wyoming when a tire blew-out and their car was thrown into the path of an approaching truck. Three people, including Miriam, were killed outright, and Elizabeth was so severely injured that her recovery seemed doubtful.

As soon as I heard about the accident Dad drove me to Lincoln where I went to see her at the Bryan Memorial Hospital. She was there for many weeks, and during that time I went over to see her as frequently as I could. Then came the day in August when her parents wrote and asked if I could accompany her home when she was ready to leave the hospital, and they also suggested that I stay for a time and get some practical experience on their local newspaper. I had made no plans for the fall so I was glad to do this. And thus is explained the circumstances that found me on a Union Pacific train headed west one day in late August.

The picture on page 46 was taken the day before I left, and I can still remember what a chore it was to get everyone in the living room at the same moment. Matters were further complicated by the fact that Margery insisted upon having her Persian kitten, Mitzi, in the picture, and this led to a big argument with Frederick and Wayne who insisted that Trix was a more important member of the household than Mitzi and should also be included. Those of you who read the chapter about old Trix will recall that his disposition was most uncertain, and he put up a fine display of ill-temper when the boys tried to lug him in and make him stand in front of the davenport. You will note that Donald seems to be the only unhappy member of the group; he was still riled up over Mitzi versus Trixie when the picture was snapped.

Whenever I hear anyone complain that Wyoming is dull and uninteresting I wonder how far they have traveled in it, for I found it a wonderfully beautiful and exciting state and I didn't even get to the Jackson-Hole country or Yellowstone. But I'm at a loss to know how either section could be more beautiful than the country around Lander.

I loved the Wind River mountains that encircled the town on two sides, and I never found anything the least bit dull about the many trips through flat sage-brush country to the Wind River Indian reservation. All in all I thoroughly enjoyed the time that I spent there, and although I've never been back in the years that have elapsed since then (Elizabeth's death a few months after I left eliminated



any reason for returning), I've promised myself that someday I will visit that lovely country again.

On my return to Shenandoah I stopped in Chadron to visit Dorothy for a few days, and I honestly thought when I got off the train about seven in the evening that I had stepped into a cyclone. Dorothy was at the station to meet me, and she explained that it was only their usual wind, that it rarely stopped blowing, and that she had grown entirely accustomed to it. I was amazed that anyone could ever grow accustomed to such a permanent gale. We had a grand picnic in the bluffs outside Chadron during my visit, and the only cloud of the entire time came at the moment of departure when Dorothy broke down and cried. She said that she hadn't been the least bit homesick until I arrived, and then suddenly it seemed to her that she just had to get on the train and go to Shenandoah with me.

Before I continue with our story I must stop to tell you something very amusing that Dorothy told me about her first night in Chadron. And to explain this adequately I must tell you that for a good many years she was an inveterate sleep-walker. Almost every night she was up prowling around, and there are a good many stories about the things that happened on such occasions. I had learned, for instance, that she would follow any kind of directions in her sleep, and until Dad found out about it and put his foot down, I used to entertain my school friends at slumber parties by getting her up to look for mashed potatoes, fried chicken, and so forth. More than once we watched her paw through every drawer in the bedroom in search of ripe olives!

Well, to get back to Chadron, it was a scorching summer night when Alexanders and Dorothy arrived and they were all thoroughly exhausted from a fifteen-hour drive. Everyone went to bed immediately, and Dorothy wore her usual going-to-bed outfit—a pair of pajamas. That is what she wore to bed, I repeat, but when she awakened in the morning she had on a sweater, her pajama trousers, and a pair of hiking boots! To find these items meant digging to the bottom of her suitcase, of course. And it's too bad, everything considered, that no one in the family could have been there when she awakened. Howard really would have enjoyed it the most for he has never recovered from the shock of opening his closet door one night years ago only to find Dorothy standing inside sound asleep!

Christmas of that year was an exceptionally happy time for Dorothy came home from Chadron and we were all together for two weeks. I remember that we went to church on Christmas Eve, and that it was the kind of a night we see pictured on Christmas cards and aren't fortunate enough to have very often. A lovely snow had fallen during the day, and when we came out of the church about nine o'clock the flakes were still falling as quietly and gently as in a dream. As a matter of fact, every single thing about that evening was



The Driftmier family in 1932. Front row: Margery, Donald, Mother, Dad and Wayne. Back row: Ted, Dorothy, Lucile and Howard.

perfect, for when we returned home we found Howard actually waiting for us on the front porch! And to explain this statement I must tell you that it was an unwritten rule in our family that when we returned from church we would all wait on the front porch and go in together, and for a number of years we had stamped back and forth impatiently saying, "Now, why in the world isn't Howard here?"

Right after the first of the year Dorothy returned to Chadron, and this time it wasn't hard for her to leave because she had gotten well acquainted and felt at home in that western Nebraska town. It was a good thing that she felt this way for in February Alexanders returned to Shenandoah and this meant that she had to move into the home of one of her classmates. Her comparatively short residence with this family was a most happy experience, and the friendships established with them have survived through all these years.

In the early part of April Mother went to Iowa City to consult Dr. Arthur Steindler, an orthopedist who certainly needs no introduction to anyone in Iowa. All of us had felt for some time that she needed a different type of brace to enable her to walk with more freedom, and Dr. Steindler understood her problems immediately and made the necessary changes. In a very short time the new braces were delivered and then Mother started walking back and forth down the long halls to get accustomed to them.

It was while Mother was in Iowa City that Frederick became very ill with an ear infection that had all the indications of being genuinely serious. As Mother's substitute at home I worried and worried about him and felt acutely responsible for getting

him back on his feet as soon as possible. But all of my attentive nursing didn't seem to help much, and suddenly we were face to face with the fact that he must be hospitalized for a mastoid operation.

This would have been bad enough with Mother at home, but with Mother hospitalized herself it seemed doubly difficult. After Dad and I had returned from the hospital with the understanding that the operation would be performed early the following morning, we decided not to tell Mother until it was all over. It seemed to us that she would be in a much happier frame of mind if she received word that he was convalescing from surgery, rather than to receive a message that he would be operated on before she could arrive.

Early the next morning Dad and I hurried to the hospital all prepared to put in that harrowing siege in the waiting room, so you can imagine our vast relief when we learned that the operation had been delayed until afternoon because Frederick seemed much improved. In the afternoon it was decided to wait until the next morning, and that was the way it went for several days—just when it was decided that the surgery must be performed, his temperature dropped and he picked up amazingly. I don't know if sheer fright did this or not! But at any rate he was dismissed from the hospital several days later without having had a major mastoid operation.

Of course Mother had been notified by this time and she came home at once. We all noticed the improvement in her walking immediately, and in a way she could get almost the same amount of "hall exercise" at home, for Frederick was in the bedroom at the end of our long hall and Mother made countless trips back and



forth to the kitchen for water, medicines, tempting food, etc. This sounds as though the rest of us weren't willing to make these trips, but Mother insisted upon it because she had been given instructions to walk as much as possible rather than just sit.

I believe that Frederick had been home about a week when he took a turn for the worse and was returned to the hospital, this time for a mastoid operation and no ifs-and-buts about it. I remember with what sinking hearts Mother, Dad and I all hurried to the hospital early in the morning to be there while he was in surgery, and then what an anti-climax it was to find that the same thing had happened again—he was so much better by morning that they decided to wait “a couple of hours and see what happens.” In the afternoon it was the same story—they'd wait until morning.

And it's at this point of the story that I feel downright hesitant about telling you what happened on the following day, for it really sounds like a positive exaggeration of trouble. It doesn't seem possible that such a battery of misfortune could descend upon one family in such a short space of time, but I can only say that it actually did—and I have the rest of the family to bear me out!

At eight o'clock on that morning we went to the hospital, once again prepared for the mastoid operation, and found that Frederick's condition showed improvement of such a reassuring nature that nothing would be done until two o'clock. He was sleeping quietly so we decided to leave and return later. On the way home we stopped to pick up the mail, and there was a letter from Chadron, not with Dorothy's writing on the envelope but with a typed address and a doctor's return in the corner. We knew that she had been ill with the flu, but her latest letter had said that she felt much better and expected to return to her classes soon, so we were utterly unprepared to learn that x-rays revealed a lung infection and that she must be sent home at once.

At eleven o'clock Dad said that he would go down town and wire the doctor to make arrangements for Dorothy to return immediately in charge of someone who could care for her between Chadron and Omaha where she would be met. He said that he would also stop and discuss the situation with our family doctor who would care for her, and that on his way back home he would also stop and see how Frederick was feeling. This left Mother and me to start making half-hearted preparations for dinner, and we had just sat down to the table with the rest of the family at noon when the quiet spring day was shattered by a resounding crash.

“It sounds as though two cars had smashed into each other at the high school corner,” Howard said.

We all jumped up and ran to the door, and even at that distance we could see that one of the cars was

Dad's maroon-colored Studebaker.

He had just pulled up for the stop-sign when a car coming up the hill on the highway went out of control in some fashion, wavered back and forth for a moment, and then crashed straight into Dad's car. If Dad had been the one who lost control of his car it wouldn't have been surprising, considering what he had on his mind that noon, but he was simply standing there peacefully waiting for the other car to pass. The only fortunate thing about the entire affair was that no one was injured in any way. However, our car had never been needed as badly as it was right then, and we were without it for almost six weeks since it had been badly smashed.

Yes, the rest of that day was gloomy!

Frederick once again weathered another stay at the hospital without having the mastoid operation, and by the day after the automobile had been wrecked it was decided that he could return home after another forty-eight hours. If I remember rightly, however, he was still in the hospital when Dorothy returned. Dad borrowed Uncle Fred Fisher's car to drive to Omaha when she arrived on an early morning train, and never, never will I forget the hours that Mother and I waited for them to come in. We hardly knew what to expect and finally had ourselves imagining that Dad might have to carry her in from the car, so it was a vast relief when they arrived and we saw that Dorothy could walk in on her own two feet. She was terribly thin (the new coat purchased during Christmas vacation hung on her like the proverbial sack), but aside from this she looked well enough to bear out the well known fact that tuberculosis is a treacherous disease because the victim doesn't show any outward symptoms in the early stages.

After careful examinations our two local doctors decided that she would make a more rapid recovery at home than in a sanatorium among strangers, so the upstairs of our house had some remodeling done to accommodate the new demands made upon it. A large sleeping porch was built on the east side with exposures on the south, east and north, and a new bathroom was made by combining two large closets. This meant that new closets were cut for the rooms that had lost their old ones, and at the same time a linen closet was made in the upstairs hall. If such an emergency arose in these days I've no idea just what one would do, but back in those days it was possible to get carpenters and painters and plumbers without delay, so in a very short time the changes had been made and Dorothy moved on to the sleeping porch.

Of course it seemed to Dorothy that when the doctors said six months in bed she would never, never get up again—six months stretched ahead like a veritable eternity of time. Yet she says today that those months went very swiftly, and so they did, everything considered. A radio was beside her bed, she had books and

magazines galore, and all of her friends were wonderfully good about coming to see her. One remarkably faithful friend, a girl who is now chief surgical nurse in one of the largest Chicago hospitals, never missed one single day visiting her during the entire six months. Of course Mother couldn't go up and down the stairs every time the notion struck her, but she did get up there in the afternoons when her broadcast was completed, and always stayed until supper time.

Fixing appetizing trays was the biggest problem for Mother and me. Dorothy's appetite had never been robust, and it was a struggle for her to consume the quantities of food that are needed in such illness. We racked our brains to think of new ways to prepare eggs, cream and milk, to fix up her tray with different dishes and flowers. Over a period of six months this is a problem to stump the most fertile minds.

In late August of that summer I went to Chicago hoping to enter the University of Chicago as a junior in the English department, but when I arrived at the campus and saw how complicated it would be to try and get to my classes in widely separated buildings, I decided that it would be too difficult and returned to Shenandoah. In just the short time that I was gone I found a great improvement in Dorothy's condition, and it was apparent to everyone that she would be out of bed before much more time passed. The x-rays confirmed our feeling that she was making a rapid recovery, and by October she was permitted to get up and take her first ride. At first she was only up a short time every day, but gradually her doctors increased the time she could be up and by Christmas she was putting in a full day downstairs. For the next year she had to be very careful about getting a great deal of sleep and not exercising too hard, but by the time she was ready to take a newspaper job here in Shenandoah the following summer she looked as healthy as the day was long and had made a complete recovery.

A couple of years later I used the fact that Dorothy had to be bedfast for six months as the basis for a short story titled “For My Sister.” Although this story was written in the first person and sounded overwhelmingly authentic, the only factual thing about it was that my sister actually was ill and confined to her bed. I mention this as an example of the way a writer sifts through facts and chooses only those to illumine the story, while his creative imagination supplies the bulk of the details. This story was included in the O'Henry Volume of Prize Stories, 1936, and it gave me a great thrill to see it for the first time at the Union station in Chicago when I was waiting for a train. However, I didn't realize until then that readers assume any story written in the first person is unquestionably authentic, for I met new acquaintances after that book was published who expressed sympathy because my sister had died! Dorothy was always amused by this, as well



she might be.

But to return to the main thread of our story, I must mention the fact that the autumn and winter of 1931-32 was a tranquil time after all of the disaster that had been crammed into a few weeks in 1931. Frederick was a high school student, a sophomore, I believe, and in good health after his long siege in the spring. The only permanent difficulty that he suffered was his inability ever again to play the French horn, an instrument on which he had made considerable progress before his illness. However, this still left Wayne tooting away on a horn, and it wasn't long before Donald blasted many an hour with his piccolo, so from the viewpoint of the family it wasn't an unrelieved tragedy that Frederick had left the band division.

I was the only person away from home that winter, for I put in the year at the Northwest State Teachers College in Maryville, Missouri. When I enrolled there I thought that I might like to teach, but after my term of practice teaching (8th grade history) I decided that it didn't appeal to me as a permanent profession. Consequently I returned to Shenandoah in May without any definite plans, but by July I had determined to go to Minneapolis to live. Certainly I didn't realize then that the pattern of my future years was stamped by my decision to go to Minneapolis, but that's the way it turned out.

Until this time I had thought vaguely now and then that it would be nice to "be a writer"; countless thousands of people have shared this vague notion with me! I hadn't the remotest idea how one went about learning to become a professional writer, but it occurred to me that there must be some tricks to the trade that it would pay me to know. Consequently I decided to go to Minneapolis and see if I could learn those tricks, for I thought in those days that one could only function as a writer if he lived among other writers. I had no way of knowing, you see, that this is precisely the last place in the world a writer should live if he is free to make a choice one way or the other.

A good many years have passed since the day I departed for Minneapolis full of eager determination to become a writer. I learned, and always the hard way, what it means to discipline oneself to sit down every day at a typewriter and pound out words. It makes not the slightest particle of difference if your brain is teeming with ideas or if it is stark, bone empty. You sit down and you pound.

No one ever teaches you to write. This is something that you learn out of your own experience pounding the typewriter. I realize now that I could have stayed in Shenandoah forever and learned just as much as I ever learned in all of the places where I went for "ideas", but this is the kind of realization that comes only when one has lived quite a spell. And certainly I wouldn't change a particle of it for I had experiences in Minneapolis that I could never have had



Dorothy enjoyed baking cakes after she was able to be out in the kitchen again following her long siege in bed.

elsewhere, and met the one person who made all of the difference. No, I'd hate to write any kind of a Family Story in which the Minneapolis years would not be mentioned!

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Now it is certainly time to get back to the rest of the family for their activities didn't come to a standstill merely because I happened to move to Minneapolis. I've discovered in writing this story that as long as we children were all at home it was comparatively simple to follow the thread of events since practically everything that happened to us was a mutual experience, but as time passed and we grew up it meant that seven different stories developed. I am just now getting to the first of these different stories, so henceforth there will have to be some sidetracking to explain why so-and-so did such-and-such a thing.

By the autumn of 1933 Dorothy had completely recovered and was working as a society reporter for one of our local newspapers. She enjoyed this work very much indeed, and she learned early in the game that there were big advantages in belonging to a large family where everyone got about in one way or another and kept a sharp eye open for what was called "Dorothy's news". At one time she wrote a column called "Seen About Town" that proved to be very popular, and the tidbits for this came from every imaginable source.

The autumn of 1933 was also the time when Howard began running a flour mill that Dad had purchased, and Mother's kitchen became a testing laboratory for the various runs of flour. Mother had always baked a great deal, but during those years she baked practically every morning with a batch of flour that Howard had brought home the night before. Mother used to say that if you could please Howard with bread and rolls you

could stack your product against all of the state fair blue winners, for the first thing he did every night when he came home was to go straight to the kitchen and pick up some rolls or a loaf of bread and scrutinize them from every possible angle. Baker's bread was almost unheard of at our house during that time, and it took a pound of butter every day to keep up with Mother's homemade bread.

I think it was about this time, although it may have been a little earlier, that Frederick had a rather unusual experience on a scout picnic. The boys had gone to Manti, a heavily timbered tract about three miles southwest of town, where Uncle Henry Field once had a summer camp for his family, and during the afternoon they decided to play Cops and Robbers. This was an old game in which the robbers never turned up with anything more precious than an old tire or tin can, but Frederick found a real treasure when he was serving as Cop. Somehow or other he was poking around some weeds at the bottom of a deep ditch when he came across a large black case, and when the case was opened he found what was obviously a very expensive saxophone. I'll never forget how excited he was when he turned up at the house with it (this was just before I went away) and told us the story of how he had happened to find it. A news item about it appeared in the paper the next day, and then the saxophone was claimed by the rightful owner, who had had it stolen from his car three months earlier. Fortunately it was still in excellent condition, so everyone was happy.

Frederick, Wayne, Margery and Donald were all in public schools here in Shenandoah during those years, and Mother and Dad still laugh about the trips that their furniture made to the high school for class plays year after year. We live only a short half-block from the high school, and of course it was the easiest thing in the world to run up to Driftmiers for a lamp, chair, or anything else that was needed for props. More than once the curtain went up for the first act of a play and revealed a stage that looked suspiciously like the Driftmier living room since everything from a davenport to a bookcase had been borrowed.

When I returned from Minneapolis to spend the summer months of 1934 I found that Mother had made really impressive strides in her ability to get around. In the four years since her accident she had progressed from being a completely bedridden invalid to a woman who could manage anything that came along. This progress had been made inch by inch, literally, and sometimes improvement seemed so minute and so slow that it was difficult to see at all; and yet in the end it stacked up to the fact that she could get along wonderfully well on crutches and we almost forgot that she was handicapped. More than once we saw her start to leave the table without remembering for just one split second that she had to reach



over and get her crutches.

Perhaps those of you who are compelled to use crutches would be interested in knowing exactly what Mother did during that period. Well, I will tell you for all of us remember most vividly what the routine was in those days.

The woman who helped with the housework didn't arrive until eight o'clock, so Mother got up at six-thirty and prepared breakfast for the family. This wasn't any quick business of coffee and fruit juice either. Breakfast meant that the table was set, a hot cereal was cooked, a huge platter of toast was made, bacon and eggs were fried, and dishes of fruit were served. Everyone got right up (Dad's call at the foot of the stairs always galvanized everyone into instant action!) and sat down at the table and ate—there was never any monkey-business about starting the day at our house.

After breakfast we all helped clear up for it was our goal to have the kitchen cleaned before Helen arrived; we all realized that she needed every bit of help that we could give her. Mother worked right along with Helen, and I remember that we divided the ironing between us—one week I tackled the shirts (sometimes thirty-five of them) and the next week Mother tackled them while I took over the house dresses, table linen, etc. Isn't it funny how little things come back to you? As I write this I remember the dress that Aunt Martha Eaton bought for Margery when she visited her in Des Moines that summer. It had a white linen blouse and a green linen button-on-skirt that had exactly twenty-one pleats in it. I know very well how many pleats it had because Mother and I always argued over who was to iron it—she always tried to spare me and I always tried to spare her! We certainly appreciated the fact that Aunt Martha had given her such a lovely dress, but not one tear was shed when it had to be passed on.

Mother did almost all of the baking for us, and this meant fresh bread and rolls practically every day plus cookies, pies, cakes and so many batches of doughnuts that I believe we could have encircled the globe with them. Saturday morning was the time when Mother really flew around the kitchen! We would no more have dreamed of facing a Sunday without a big cake than of setting fire to the house. Sometimes it was a handsome angel food, other times it was a big white cake or a devil's food cake, but there was always a cake, make no mistake about that.

At one-fifteen Mother broadcast Kitchen-Klatter, and although she had a microphone at home she frequently went down to the studio. This entailed walking down our front steps and out to the car, and then through a long building and up another flight of steps at the studio. She wasn't the least bit troubled by this, and frequently went on from the studio to do some shopping or to call on friends. Almost every Sunday found her climbing up the long flight of steps that led to the Congregational church, and



The five Field sisters in 1935. Jessie Shambagh is sitting on the arm of the chair; Helen Fischer and Susan Conrad are standing; Martha Eaton, center front, and Leanna Driftmier on her left.

during that time she very rarely missed a meeting of Aid Society or the Congregational Woman's Club. Moreover, if a movie came to town that she wanted to see it was no trick at all to go to the theater. You can see that aside from the fact all of this activity had to be done with crutches, she was free to do pretty much as she pleased.

Earlier I mentioned the two specific exercises that helped Mother to regain her freedom: walking between two long iron pipes that Dad had cemented into the back yard, and riding Wayne's bicycle that had been safely mounted in a stationary frame. Both of these devices played a big part in the unending battle Mother waged to overcome her paralysis. However, to them must be added the benefit that she derived from swimming. As soon as warm weather arrived she went to our local pool every morning and took a plunge. All of the children were very willing to go with her and to help her try something new every day in the water, and she has always felt that this particular form of exercise helped her considerably.

As I said before, I noticed great improvement in Mother's walking when I returned from Minneapolis in 1934, and it seemed most reasonable to all of us that she should feel able to take a trip with Aunt Helen Fischer at that time. We didn't realize how doubtful she felt in her own mind about the advisability of accepting Aunt Helen's invitation, but even though she had expressed her doubts we wouldn't have given her a chance to do anything but go for we had learned along the way to insist upon Mother's making an extra effort to accomplish the things that meant pleasure.

All of us were excited when we saw her walk out to Aunt Helen's car bright and early on a late May morning. I'll confess too that we were also somewhat nervous and worried be-

cause of what had happened the last time she got into a car to turn south on a trip, but at least we had sufficient wits and judgment not to indicate our anxiety in any way!

Mother says that this particular vacation was one of the nicest times she ever had. There were three of them in the car—Mother, Aunt Helen, and Irene Swanson who lived with Fischers a good many years and often accompanied Aunt Helen on trips to help with the driving. They didn't have any schedule in mind, and for that matter they didn't even have an exact destination mapped out; they just intended to drive as far as they felt like going and to take their time about it. We followed their progress by cards that Mother wrote and mailed every evening, and not until they reached Centerville, Missouri (a small town in the Ozarks somewhat southeast of St. Louis) did we hear that they were stopping for several days.

I've forgotten now exactly how long Mother was gone on that trip but it must have been around ten days or two weeks. However, I do know how happy all of us were that she had had the opportunity to go away and enjoy herself before the terrific heat of that summer descended upon us. Surely no one needs to be reminded of the heat we experienced throughout the middlewest in 1934! Those were the days we tried to get our heavy work done very early in the morning, for it was nothing unusual to see the thermometer start climbing towards the 100 mark by seven o'clock. And those nights! Can anyone ever forget how we took to the yards in search of just one tiny breeze, of prowling about hour after hour in a helpless effort to find something that would pass for comfort? I'm sure that had any traveler from an earthquake area driven through middlewestern towns on those summer nights he would have looked at the people stretched out on lawns and concluded that the vicinity must have been visited by a terrific quake just before he arrived!

After the long drouth of 1934 it was a tremendous relief to have autumn arrive, to swing into the school activities that were uppermost in those days when so many of us were at home. Even so, however, the passing years had eliminated one Driftmier after another from the Shenandoah schools, and by the September of which I write there were only three left to start down the hill every morning. Wayne was a junior in high school, Margery was a freshman, and Donald entered the 7th grade. Frederick entered Tarkio college as a freshman that fall and drove back and forth the twenty-odd miles every day with a carload of Shenandoah students. Dorothy trekked the streets in search of news (she enjoyed her job on the paper so much that the folks could hardly get her to take time to eat), Howard continued to run the flour mill, and I returned to Minneapolis for another winter. This accounts for all of us in the autumn of 1934.

I don't recall that anything of earth-shaking proportions happened during



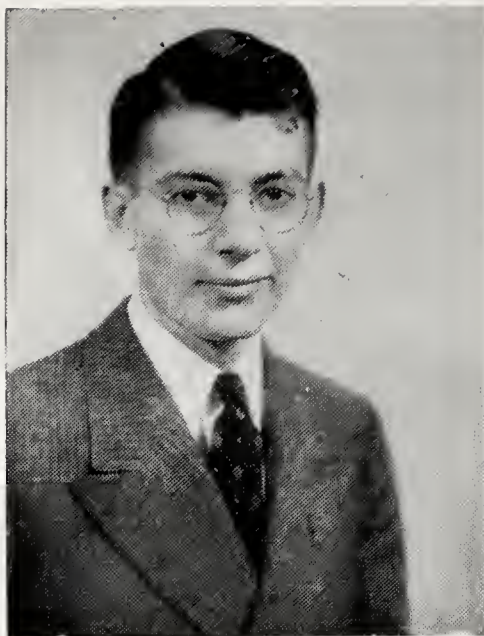
the winter months. When the Christmas holidays arrived I went home for a short visit and discovered that Donald had given up the piccolo in favor of some deep snoring-sounding horn—I've forgotten just which one. Perhaps the family nerves had worn pretty thin by this time, or perhaps it was merely a precautionary measure for continued sanity, but at any rate Donald was consigned to the basement or a room upstairs for his long, dirge-like sessions with that horn. He had finally mastered the number titled "Break the News to Mother" and, like the fiddle with only one string, he played it over and over, hour after hour. I don't believe that anyone came into the house during Christmas vacation without hearing that mournful croak directly under his feet or floating down from above. It was a very trying time!

I think that the winter of 1934-35 was a reasonably happy period for all of us, and certainly it was for me because I had started writing in earnest. Perhaps at this point I should go back a few months and tell you about something that happened during the previous summer for it was the beginning of a new period in my life.

On one scalding August afternoon when everyone else had retired to the basement in search of relief from the heat, I went up to the sleeping porch where my typewriter stood on a small table and sat down to write an article about the effects of the depression upon young people who found that there was no place for them to use their professional training. Surely it isn't necessary to remind anyone that 1934 was one of the rock-bottom depression years! I wrote the article in about three hours, revised it the next day, and then wondered what to do with it. Suddenly the name of a literary agent in New York flashed into my memory, so I bundled up the article and mailed it to him, confident that he'd find immediate use for the return postage that was enclosed. Much to my surprise it didn't come back to me, and the first thing I heard was a letter in late September saying that he had sold the article to *The Woman's Home Companion*.

This letter reached me in Minneapolis, and of course it seemed to me the most remarkable thing that had ever happened! In fact, I actually sent a wire to Mother and Dad giving them the news! To one who wants to write there is no thrill comparable to the thrill that comes with selling your first piece of work, although of course I didn't know this at the time and assumed that if I were fortunate enough to sell more things I would be equally excited. Alas, I was mistaken. Never again is there that same breathless moment of disbelief and wonder. By the time I'd sold a few more things I was taking for granted the fact that someone would buy what I'd written, and wondering only how editors arrived at the amount of the check they sent. That first great thrill is also the last one, but believe me when I say that it's one of the big moments of a lifetime.

In the summer of 1935 several things happened that were out of the ordi-



Wayne had this picture taken when he graduated from the Shenandoah high school in 1936.

nary. Two of them can be put down on the credit side of our family life, and one must be put down on the debit side in very large letters for it was catastrophic.

The first pleasant thing concerns Dorothy and Frederick and the fine trip they were able to take with their father's sisters, Anna and Erna Driftmier. We first heard about this trip when Mother and Dad returned from spending a day in Des Moines, and as they drove up in front of the house that night both Dorothy and Frederick ran out to meet them with a telegram in their hands. This telegram asked them to leave immediately for Oberlin, Ohio, where they would join Aunt Erna and Aunt Anna for an extensive trip through the Eastern states and up into Canada. Both of our Aunts were teaching in Oberlin at that time and had decided to spend part of their vacation traveling, preferably with Dorothy and Frederick.

This caused great excitement, as you can well imagine. Even in those days Frederick was strong for traveling, and the prospect of such a trip was exactly what he wanted. There wasn't much time to get them ready, but Mother hurriedly fixed their clothes, bought a few new things, and packed their suitcases. I've been told that Dorothy opened her penny bank the night before they left, and by way of explanation I must say that she had been saving pennies for a long, long time, and everytime she added more we asked her what she intended to do when the bank (a Japanese box with a trick opening) was full. She always said that she didn't know for certain, but that something out-of-the-way could be done with them. Of course this was the perfect moment to open the box, and if I'm not mistaken I believe that it contained around fifteen-hundred pennies or more.

About twenty-four hours after the telegram had been received, Dorothy and Frederick were on their way. They had to take a bus to Chicago, change there for a bus to Cleveland,

and then change again for the bus to Oberlin. Mother said that she felt just a little apprehensive when they waved goodbye—it seemed like a pretty complex piece of traveling for two young people who hadn't been out on their own before.

As soon as they had gone Mother and Dad started an extensive piece of remodeling in the kitchen. It was the second time in about ten years that improvements had been made, and perhaps you'd like to hear some of the details.

When we moved into that house in 1926 the kitchen had exactly one built-in convenience—a sink. It stood by itself in the northeast corner of the kitchen and was so low that we all had broken backs after a session with the dishpan. There were two long and narrow windows, one on the north wall and one on the east wall. There were no built-in cupboards of any kind, and the only shelves were long, narrow pantry shelves that had to be reached by going out into a hall and then through a door. For the amount of cooking that had to be done in our house it was the most inconvenient arrangement imaginable.

A year after we moved into the house Dad had the entire west wall built solid with cupboards and this made an enormous difference. Then the next year he purchased a new gas range and one of the very first electric refrigerators, thus bringing the kitchen pretty much up-to-date. It served our needs very well until Mother was compelled to do her work under a handicap, and this is how it happened that Dad had substantial changes made in the summer of 1935.

They worked together drawing plans for their remodeled kitchen, and since there was no delay in getting carpenters back in those days, the changes were made in a short time. On the north wall they removed the long narrow window and built two short windows above the new sink. This sink was flanked on both sides by cupboards—they were moved from the west wall and cut into two sections to fit the new area. An ironing board was built in, new linoleum was laid, and the position of the stove and refrigerator was rearranged. When the work was completed Mother had a much more convenient kitchen, and since she enjoyed cooking it was a pleasure to see her with everything closer at hand.

A few other changes were also made at this time. Our large porch on the east (the kitchen opens into it) had its face lifted, so to say, with new screens for summer use and new glass windows for winter use. We had visions of making a sort of "living porch" out of it and Mother purchased some furniture for it, but somehow or other this was a losing battle—converting it from a "back porch" to a "living porch". Our family simply had too much stuff that had to come to roost someplace. The first thing we knew there was a ripe collection of luggage, trunks, boxes, play equipment, etc., crowding all of the new porch furniture into one corner, and after two or three sum-





On a summer afternoon in 1936 we went out to the yard for pictures. Dad is sitting in front, and behind him are Frederick, Donald, Howard and Wayne.



On the same afternoon this was taken. Dorothy is sitting on the arm of Mother's chair; Lucile and Margery are standing.

mers of struggling with this problem we just gave up and let it be a back porch.

I must also add here that at the same time the kitchen was remodeled Mother and Dad purchased new dining room furniture—and I mention it because this was a definite milestone in our family life. Our big family, plus innumerable guests, had “gone through” two different sets of dining room furniture and it was clearly understood that no replacements would be made until we were all old enough to take care of things. As long as there was anyone small enough to string out the dining room chairs for trains or support for tents, we could just use the old decrepit furniture and make the best of it. But in the summer of 1935 we officially closed the train and tent period for all time, and the furniture came into our dining room that will remain there as long as it is our family home. We children were all old enough to appreciate it, and to realize also how wonderfully free we had been from nagging in earlier days. There seems to be a strong difference of opinion among people as to how much freedom a child should be allowed in his home, but Mother and Dad always believed that there was a time ahead when things would “stay nice” and surely we seven children profited by their belief.

Everything had just settled back down to normal again when the catastrophe happened. Dorothy and Frederick were in the East on their trip that I mentioned before, and Mother was writing to them on the afternoon of her accident. She didn't realize that it had grown so late until she glanced up at the clock above her desk, and when she noticed that it was nearly six o'clock she picked up her crutches and hurried towards the kitchen. Almost without exception

Margery was at home to set the table and help with the evening meal, but on this particular day she had gone on a picnic and there was no one around. As Mother hurried down our long hall her crutch slipped on something and the next instant she was lying on the floor.

Frequently when people are severely injured they know almost instantly what damage has been done. That was true in 1930 when Mother had her back broken in the car wreck, and it was true again on this afternoon—she said that the second she fell she knew that she had broken her hip. Of course she called for help at once, but no one answered—this was practically unheard of at our home, because with such a big family there hadn't been more than a half-dozen times in five years that Mother had been completely alone. However, this was one of those rare times and Mother realized that probably there would be no help forthcoming until Howard returned from the mill or Dad came home from the office.

Fortunately, our next door neighbor, Mrs. Alexander, stopped in at just that moment for a short visit, and when Mother called to her she ran to the back hall. In just a few minutes she had reached Dad, other neighbors and the doctor, and help was at hand. Before much more time had passed Mother was in our local hospital, X-rays had been made that showed the fractured hip, and a cast had been put on that extended from her shoulders to her ankles.

I was not at home when all of this happened in July. Earlier that year I had gone to Sacramento, California to spend several months, and at the time of Mother's accident I was visiting Philip Field and his family in Berkeley. My first inkling of what had happened came when I picked up a home-town paper and read, “Mrs.

M. H. Driftmier seriously injured in accident.” To say that this was a shock is stating it mildly. I couldn't believe my eyes and went to the telephone immediately to call and find out how things stood. No one in the family realized that I had access to any of our local papers, and since I was so far away they didn't think that anything would be gained by telling me and having me worry. I was so disturbed by the news when I telephoned that I made plans to return to Shenandoah almost immediately.

Frederick and Dorothy had no way of reading our local papers so they didn't know anything about the accident until they returned from their trip a month later. Mother had been insistent that nothing be said to them about it. She knew that it would ruin their happy summer for them, and that there was time enough to break the news that she was again bedfast.

Mother said that if she had to be hospitalized, at least it was a blessing to be in our local hospital where her family and friends could call twice a day. One of the hardest things about the long months in the Kansas City hospital in 1930 had been the fact that she could so rarely see her family. But things were different after this accident—she never had a chance to grow lonely.

In fact, one day at the end of her first week Margery and Donald arrived with a basket and in the basket were five kittens! Mother's beautiful Persian cat had chosen this opportune time to present us with five equally beautiful kittens, and the children knew that Mother would be eager to see them. This amused her very much—she said that it wasn't everyone who had five new kittens call on them at the hospital!

As soon as Mother could be released



from the hospital she was taken home, and the downstairs office was fixed up once again into a bedroom. Aunt Susan Conrad, Mother's sister, came to take care of her and sort of supervise the family. For a while she broadcast the Kitchen-Klatter program too, but Mother couldn't wait to get back on the air to visit with you friends who had done so much to keep up her spirits with your lovely letters and cards, so in a short time the microphone was placed on a stool beside her bed and she resumed her afternoon visits again.

There were two things that helped to make the time pass more quickly—our rose garden and an ingenious system of mirrors that Donald rigged up to enable Mother to see in all directions. Wayne took the responsibility for the rose garden and enjoyed buying many different varieties of roses and caring for them. Mother could see it from her window and thoroughly delighted in the flowers and in watching Wayne work there. Every morning he brought a fresh blossom for her bud vase before he left for work.

The arrangement of mirrors that Donald rigged up was really very clever for a boy of thirteen, and throughout the long weeks in bed Mother could see beyond her room and keep an eye on the household.

Eventually Mother was out of the cast and beginning once again to make the effort of moving about. Those of you who have had fractured hips and spent months in a cast, surely know too how painful it is to begin using muscles that haven't been exercised for weeks and weeks. At the outset it seems simply impossible to make the effort. There are a thousand strong temptations to give up. But somehow or other (meaning the triumph of sheer will power!) the effort is made and slow progress results.

Mother says that the thing which helped her to limber up her muscles more than any other one device was the frame that Dad had made for her. Perhaps those of you who have relatives or friends in the first stages of trying to walk again after a long siege in a cast would like to try this idea too. The frame was square with casters on the four legs, and it was high enough to furnish good support; of course the legs were very broad at the base to eliminate all danger of its toppling over. With this frame Mother could get about the house for short periods of time, and it proved to be of unmeasurable benefit.

However, in spite of the tremendous effort that she made to learn to walk on crutches again, the fractured hip proved to be the proverbial last straw and as time passed it grew increasingly apparent that Mother and her wheelchair were to be inseparable companions. It is one thing to have a fractured hip when there is nothing else wrong. But it is another and very serious thing to have a fractured hip on top of a fractured back. I want to make this clear in case someone with a fractured hip is suddenly thinking in profound discouragement



Mother is able to go up and down the cement ramp by herself. This was built leading to our front porch when it became apparent that Mother and her wheelchair were to be inseparable companions.

that she will never walk again! Don't allow yourself to be depressed for a moment unless you have a fractured back as well, and even then you shouldn't be tempted to give up for great strides have been made in treating fractures since the year about which I am writing.

When autumn arrived in 1935 we were all at home again except Dad. His work took him all over the state with headquarters in Des Moines, but almost without exception he managed to spend the weekends with us. All of us remember vividly that almost the first thing he did when he entered the house for those weekend visits was to step over to our old-fashioned clock and wind it! He believed, and with good reason, that it was never wound in his absence. Somehow there wasn't a one of us who could keep that clock firmly in mind.

Donald was in the eighth grade that year, Margery and Wayne were in high school, Frederick was a student at Tarkio College, Howard was running the mill, and Dorothy and I were working on our local paper. Except for the fact that we missed Dad a great deal, it was a happy winter for us because we were all busy and well.

One thing we particularly enjoyed about that winter was our many happy evenings with Frederick's college friends and several of his teachers. They were all most agreeable and interesting people, and it was a pleasure to entertain them frequently. Monopoly was a brand new game at that time, and I remember that we bought three sets and had tremendously exciting games that went on for hours and hours. I won't tell you how late it was when we finally stopped playing and all went to the kitchen to prepare a lunch, but if you know anything about monopoly you also know that it was mighty late!

It was during this winter that Mother made plans to start publishing Kitchen-Klatter once again. I say "once again" because 'way back in the twenties she had gotten out a small magazine that she called "The Mother's Hour Letter". This had gone into a good many homes and it seemed to result in mutual pleasure—Mother enjoyed writing it and from the letters that came back she knew that you

enjoyed reading it. There was no set routine for this first small publication. Whenever sufficient material accumulated that Mother wished to share with her friends, she simply got it together and sent it to the printers. When it was done she announced this on her program and then her friends sent in a stamped, self-addressed envelope. I've forgotten how many issues of "The Mother's Hour Letter" were sent out and I'm not even sure that we have a copy of each one, but this was the background that accounted for the many letters between 1930 and 1935 that asked if it would be possible to resume publishing the magazine.

When Mother first talked about getting out a new magazine we felt that she would enjoy it and, as she said, there seemed to be no better way to acknowledge the kindly, helpful letters that arrived in every mail. These letters were full of fine helps, discoveries that you had made in your own kitchens and experiences that you had had with your children, and it seemed a shame to read them over the air and then put them aside. Mother felt for a long time that something should be done to keep them in a more permanent form, and she felt too that by means of this magazine she could keep in touch with you as satisfactorily as though she sat down to write a long letter telling you how things were going with the Driftmiers from time to time.

All of us children were greatly interested in this project, and we were as excited as Mother when the first copy came back from the printers just as it had years ago. When the first issue was ready to be mailed out we all worked together filling the envelopes that you had sent. They were of all sizes and shapes, of course, and my! what a job it was to fold the magazine so that it would fit into the smallest envelopes! We always left these hard problems for Wayne because he could fold more neatly than the rest of us. Many an evening we sat around the dining room table and worked at this, and when we finished each night there would be a big basket full to running over that Donald took to the postoffice after he came home from school the next day.

You can see from this why we have always felt that our magazine was a link between your family and our family. From the time Mother compiled the material, I read proof from the printers, we all pitched in to get the copies in those envelopes and then Donald delivered them to the postoffice, no one outside of our family worked on it. And perhaps right here I should write a word of explanation about the change of name. Mother felt that she wanted a more comprehensive title than "The Mother's Hour Letter", so with that first issue she decided to use the name of her program and call it the Kitchen-Klatter magazine. And I'm sure that those of you who have read it since 1935 cannot imagine it being called anything else.

Aside from the excitement of seeing our magazine published we had Fred-



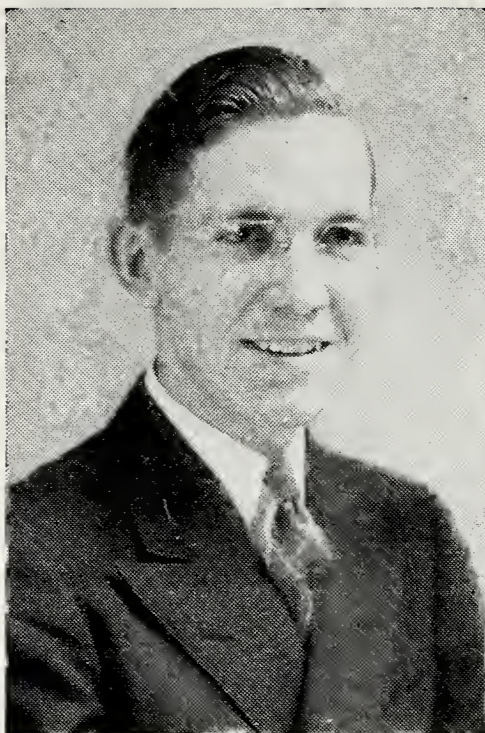
erick's activities to keep us interested that winter. When he found his way into the Tarkio College Debate Team all of his propensities for public speaking came into full flower! Many were the trips we made to hear him debate, and when he won contests and traveled to distant cities we waited eagerly to hear the news. Even in those days Frederick was a convincing speaker. After listening to some of the contests and debates that winter there was no doubt in our minds as to what his choice of a profession would be.

The Christmas of 1935 we were all at home, something that has never happened on any holiday since then. Everyone was well and we had our usual happy exchange of gifts on Christmas Eve. And suddenly I am reminded of something amusing that happened in connection with those gifts, something that kept us laughing for a long time.

Dorothy's gift to me that Christmas was a pair of fine kid gloves, and my gift to her was a pair of unusual gold earrings. We were mutually delighted with those things and promptly put them on to wear to midnight church services later that night. Somehow or other I lost one of the gloves and Dorothy lost one of her earrings, but we didn't want the other to know about our respective losses. It occurred to me that Dorothy never read the classified ads and that I might turn up the glove by inserting an advertisement. However, Dorothy had arrived at the same conclusion, and unknown to me she also telephoned the next day and put in an ad for the missing earring. When the paper arrived the next night it carried both advertisements, one after the other, and of course it looked so strange that many people noticed it and called to find out if we had turned up our missing gifts! That was when we discovered what had really happened. And I must add right here that the glove and earring never showed up.

Nothing out of the ordinary happened the rest of the winter and through the spring. In early summer Dad returned for good, and his year of constant traveling was over. We had some happy picnics on the first fine days of summer, and then in June I went to Chicago to attend a conference of Midwestern writers. There I met a number of my good Minneapolis friends whom I hadn't seen for a year, and they prevailed upon me to return to Minneapolis in late August. At that time I was free to come and go as I pleased, so I decided to settle down in Minneapolis once again.

When school started in the autumn of 1936 both Frederick and Wayne were students at Tarkio college and drove back and forth daily with a car full of other students. This meant a drive of twenty-three miles each way, and regardless of how icy the roads might be or how bad the weather, they always left the house promptly at 7:15. I think that Mother put in many uneasy hours that winter waiting eagerly for their return in the evening, and every time a car was wrecked in any way on that road she



Frederick's high school graduation picture, May, 1935.

was apprehensive for days. They never had even a close shave throughout that entire year, and the nearest thing they had to excitement was seeing a big transport plane just skim the top of a hill. There was quite a bad storm raging and the plane was obviously off of its course. Frederick still says that he doesn't see how it missed crashing—that it couldn't have cleared the crest of the hill by more than a few feet.

When Christmas rolled around once again we all planned to be together, but at the last minute an editorial board meeting for the magazine on which I worked was called in Chicago and I had to go there. However, everyone else was at home and when I telephoned on Christmas Eve I could tell that they were having a gay and happy time.

Since this story is written with at least some intention of chronological sequence I must record that the next event of family importance was my marriage to Russell Verness on January 8th, 1937. We had met each other at an artist's studio in Minneapolis when an exhibition of paintings was being shown in September, and later in the fall my letters home began to contain many references to this new friend. However, I never once indicated that it was more than a casual friendship, so I realize now how shocked the family must have been when the telephone rang at eleven o'clock on a cold January morning and I told them that I was married.

Perhaps it was a peculiar and unconventional way to get married, everything considered, but I had always said that I didn't want an elaborate wedding of any kind—and goodness knows I didn't have one! We took a dear friend with us to Northwood, Iowa, and of course we had no way of knowing when we started that we would run into the heaviest storm of the winter on that particular night!

I remember that we stayed at the hotel in Northwood, and awakened the next morning to find the streets simply buried in snow. It wasn't until the walks had been shoveled to make one narrow path that we could get around the corner to have breakfast at a restaurant.

As we sat in the restaurant we could look down the street and see the Court House, but to get there was another proposition—that was the deepest snow I have ever seen. Finally a grocery delivery truck came along and we "hitched" a ride to the Court House. Russell and the truck driver took turns shoveling a path from the street to the steps so that Valerie and I could get through. It was an awful morning to call out the Justice of the Peace, but he finally made it and we went ahead with the ceremony. As soon as it was over I telephoned home and announced that Mrs. Russell Verness was calling, and because there had been no preparation whatsoever for this news you can imagine how surprised everyone was. However, they could readily understand why we were married under those circumstances for neither Russell or I could be gone from our respective jobs for more than one day.

There was only time to get from the Court House to the depot once the ceremony was over, so our friendly delivery man turned up again and took us. We arrived just in time to ask the station agent to flag the train, and we've never forgotten what a dramatic sight it made as it came across that white field with the snow ploughs throwing up mountains of dazzling snow on each side. We had our wedding dinner on the train, and once back in Minneapolis went to the apartment that we had made arrangements to occupy as soon as we were married. Fortunately there was no housing problem in those days. It seems hard to believe now when it's a terrible problem to find a house or an apartment to rent, but when we started looking for a place in 1937 we had our choice of at least five-hundred apartments at the price we could afford to pay.

Two weeks after Russell and I were married Dorothy came from Shenandoah to Minneapolis to spend a week-end with us. This was Russell's first meeting with any member of my family, and the way things turned out it was over a year before he met them all because on our first trip together back to Shenandoah a couple of my brothers and sisters were out of town. With a small family you generally meet the whole kit-and-kaboodle at one time, but when you have a big family it takes a long time to make the rounds. We will never forget the time Dorothy had an out-of-town guest who arrived on a Friday evening, and when we sat down to the table on Sunday noon she was still meeting new members of the family!

But Dorothy will never forget her first meeting with Russell because of this: the morning she arrived it was twenty-eight degrees below zero, and since Russell has always felt cold weather intensely he bundled up in fine style to make the trip down to



the Union Station. It didn't occur to either one of us to make any advance explanation, so when we returned to the apartment and he casually took off two suit-jackets plus a sweater and an overcoat she was simply flabbergasted. I'm sure she decided in her own mind that he always wore that many layers of clothing.

We had a wonderful visit with Dorothy. Our friends came in to meet her, and several of them banded together and entertained for her. We had so much to say and so much to do during those few short hours that I'm sure we didn't get any sleep worth mentioning. When we took her down to the station for her return trip she carried with her our absolute insistence that Mother and Dad come to visit us as soon as possible. We were confident that in one way or another mother could manage the flights of stairs up to our third-floor apartment.

And sure enough, in June we *did* manage. Mother and Dad went up to Spirit Lake for their annual vacation, and then came on to Minneapolis to visit us. Right here I must stop and say something about their Spirit Lake trips, for many of you friends who are reading this will recall them because you first met the folks at their annual picnic at Arnold's Park. These Kitchen-Klatter picnics have long been an institution, a most enjoyable institution, and for days after their return to Shenandoah we have heard about old friends and new friends. Our file of pictures is full of snapshots taken during those afternoons over a period of years. Mother has always said that one of the things which interests her greatly is the changes that take place from one year to the next. Babies who are still being held and carried at one picnic are up on their feet and tearing all around by the next picnic. Shy little girls and boys have had a year at school between picnics, and on the next visit are talkative and assured. During the war years these picnics had to be discontinued because of gas rationing, but in years to come we hope that they can be resumed again.

After the annual Kitchen-Klatter picnic of 1937 Mother, Dad, Dorothy and Margery drove on up to Minneapolis, as I've said, and they may have forgotten the circumstances of their arrival but I certainly haven't! It was my understanding that they would arrive about six in the evening, so I planned a fancy dinner made up of their favorite dishes and intended to have everything beautifully immaculate and polished. After all, it was my very first opportunity to entertain my parents in my own home!

Early in the morning I started working on our two-room apartment, and when twelve o'clock came I had everything piled into the kitchen. My schedule called for teaching a class in contemporary American literature from one o'clock until two o'clock, so I planned to return from the class, tackle the kitchen, and then be in apple-pie order by five o'clock—that would give me a full hour to get cleaned up and rested before they arrived at six o'clock. You can see how minutely I had planned every detail!



Mother and Margery at a park near the St. Croix river in Minnesota, June, 1937.

Well, shortly after two I returned to the apartment, and when I opened the door I found Mother, Dad, Dorothy and Margery sitting in the living room! The manager of the apartment-house had permitted them to enter when they explained who they were, so there they sat, puzzled by my absence and obviously disconcerted by the condition of the kitchen. Oh dear! Through all of these years I've carried painfully vivid memories of my sensations when I realized that all of my beautifully laid plans had been dashed to pieces.

However, such details are genuinely inconsequential, of course, and we really had a wonderful visit. It was the first time Mother and Dad had ever visited in a small apartment in a huge city apartment-house, and I'm sure they were in a state of chronic wonder at our ability to live in such a minute amount of space. Mother never did see how I produced those meals in a kitchen that would have fitted neatly into one small corner of her kitchen at home! I'm also sure that they had their own private doubts about the bed that came out of the wall! Russell, Margery, Dorothy and I all went to the large home of a friend who generously offered to take us in at night, for our apartment could accommodate two sleepers and no more. If any of you have visited a married son or daughter in such an apartment I think you probably can understand all of the complexities and strangeness involved.

We had many wonderful rides around Minneapolis and St. Paul, and Mothers and Dad thoroughly enjoyed seeing the beautiful lakes and many fine homes that surround them. Russell's parents had us all out for a lovely Sunday night lunch, so all in all it was a happy time—one that we've never forgotten in any detail. They left early in the morning a few days later, but Dorothy stayed on with us for a three weeks' visit. She had had her bicycle shipped up to Minneapolis, and she had a wonderful

time riding around the lakes with some young people she'd met who also enjoyed this.

After the folks returned to Shenandoah they had a busy summer. Many, many of you friends came to call, and Mother says that she remembers a good many hot afternoons when practically all of the chairs in the house were moved out into the side-yard and she sat and visited with you. The only two members of our family who weren't at home that summer were Frederick and I. Frederick was taking some extra work at Tarkio College and came home only for a few short visits. There were a few courses he wanted that couldn't be crowded into the winter months, for Frederick's winter schedule was something to behold with its many out-of-town debate trips, filling pulpits in outlying towns on Sunday, and a host of other activities.

During this summer of 1937 Wayne was working in one of our local banks and learning a great deal that would stand him in good stead later. Dorothy left the newspaper when it was sold and went to work at the May Seed and Nursery Company; she has always had considerable ability for office details, and she enjoyed this job that she held for several years. Howard was busy at the mill as usual, and Mother was still baking bread almost every day to test his various runs of flour.

In late July Russell and I stopped in Shenandoah to spend three days on our road to Mexico City. That was the most exciting trip we've ever had, and our five months in Mexico were incomparable. When we made this trip the big International Highway was just being completed—if I remember rightly it was opened for traffic in June and we drove over it a month later. It was a marvelous drive from many standpoints, but so harrowing because of the many dangerous sections of highway that when we returned to the United States in late November we made the trip by train.

A number of times during the past years I have read articles about Mexico in which the writers stated that in 1937 the old Mexico that had remained virtually unchanged throughout the centuries gave way to the comparatively modern country that travelers know today. There are a good many sound and interwoven reasons for this, but it certainly isn't a happenstance that the date coincides with the opening of a big modern highway that begins at the border town of Laredo, Texas, and runs into Mexico City. Prior to the opening of this road the traffic in and out of the country was carried on almost exclusively by rail, and necessarily this limited the number of people who were able to make the trip.

Because we were what might almost be called pioneers in making the trip by highway, it occurred to me that perhaps you'd be interested in hearing some of the details. I'm very certain that many of our experiences in Mexico could never be duplicated today, so in one sense of the word I am writ-



ing about a time that can never be recaptured.

We boarded a bus in Laredo, Texas on a scalding July afternoon, and it was then, for the first time, that we had a glimpse of how people travel in other countries. When all of the bus seats were filled we expected to pull away, but it developed that we were only started on the process of loading a bus. First kitchen chairs were brought in and lined up down the aisle. With undescribable confusion and chaos these seats were filled. Then people climbed up on top of the bus—I've never known what in the world they found to cling to. When all of this was done the driver and his assistants started throwing on luggage. And when all of this was done the driver began collecting tickets from his passengers. This meant, in turn, that everyone on the kitchen chairs had to get off since it was impossible for anyone to move down the aisle, so all in all I'd say that we were a good hour loading that bus. And now I will add that the thermometer stood at 118! It was the only time we have come close to being overcome by the heat.

Towards evening we reached Monterey, one of the large industrial cities of Mexico—a great steel center. It has a magnificent site for it stands at the base of towering mountains; one of them is named "Saddleback" mountain and it was a breathless spectacle under the light of a full moon. We stayed in Monterey for several days and had a wonderful time exploring the city. I remember vividly that we were still trying to become accustomed to different money, and by some misfortune we gave our waiter at the hotel dining room what amounted to a half-cent as a tip. He threw it at us!

About eleven o'clock one evening we went to the bus station in Monterey and boarded the bus that was to take us on to Mexico City. We drove at a terrific clip through the night and watched brilliant electrical storms in the mountains on either side of the highway. I was under the impression that everything was going very well, so it was a blow when the bus broke down about two in the morning and we all had to pile out and stand at the side of the highway. Our driver wasn't the least bit irritated or excited—that was one of the first things we noticed about Mexicans. Events that would leave Americans hysterical with irritation simply rolled off their backs. It made no earthly difference to this driver that he was stranded with a broken bus miles from nowhere!

A long time later another bus came from the south and evidently word of our plight was taken back to some point for just about daylight we were rescued. After breakfast at some small town along the road we boarded a bus that looked as though it had been made by piling two chicken coops on top of four wheels, and were off for Mexico City.

The first two hours of that trip took us through tropical jungles where we could see parrots in the trees, and



We have Dad to thank for all of our family group pictures! This one dates from the summer of 1938. Margery, Mother and Dad are in front. Frederick, Lucile, Wayne, Donald, Dorothy and Howard are in back.

great crowds of monkeys in bushes along the streams. Then we began to climb, and perhaps you can get some idea of our precipitous ascent when I tell you that we went from sea level to almost 13,000 feet in the space of less than seven hours. I can imagine nothing in this world more dramatic and incredibly beautiful than the views from many points of that highway. Many places we could look down thousands and thousands of feet, and in other places we could look over range after range of mountains. Some of the details of these views are stamped on our minds forever.

Unfortunately I couldn't concentrate exclusively on the scenery because of my certainty that the driver intended to kill all of us. He had a passion for driving on the wrong side of the road, and many times as we rounded a hairpin curve he simply put on his brakes and skidded around the corner on loose gravel. There were no guard rails at countless points, and occasionally I had the devastating experience of looking out the window and seeing nothing whatsoever—it was a sheer drop from the side of the bus down thousands of feet.

After lunch in a mountain village we changed drivers and I breathed a vast sigh of relief. Surely now we would get a conservative man who loved life and intended to continue loving it. Alas! this new driver was not only addicted with a penchant for driving sixty miles per hour on the wrong side of the road, but he was also a most garrulous soul who enjoyed chatting with his passengers. Our session with him came to a climax when he held in one hand a bunch of snapshots that some passenger had passed up to him, studied them intently and commented on them at great length. All of this took place while he was driving on two wheels around hairpin curves.

We reached Mexico City (yes, we actually did!) about eight o'clock in the evening. If I had a dozen pages and thousands of words I could not begin to describe the impression that this vast city makes on the traveler who approaches it by highway. It is wonderfully beautiful—I will content myself with saying only that.

I could write about dozens of things that happened to us during our stay in Mexico, but my space is almost gone so I can mention only one more thing: in late October we went through one of the heaviest earthquakes of modern times. Our big house simply rocked, and when it was all over we found a dozen windows broken, massive timbers cracked, the floors thrown up in places, and even sections of the big wall outside knocked to the ground. It was our first experience with an earthquake—and we were apprehensive for weeks!

\* \* \* \* \*

The year of 1938 brought a number of changes to our family, although even as I write this sentence I am aware of the fact that we experienced mighty few years in which there weren't changes! When your immediate circle contains nine people it is taken for granted that at least a few things are bound to happen.

In accounting for our whereabouts in the early months of that year I find that Mother and Dad were right here at home, both of them very busy and forever interested in new plans for this magazine. Howard was putting in long hours at the mill and really making headway in building new machinery for seed-cleaning purposes. It wouldn't be even a shade's deviation from the truth if Howard were to write "inventor" on any form that called for stating his profession. He has built complicated machinery from scratch without blueprints of any kind, and without exception has made



improvements of his own invention that put the finished machine in a bracket of its own.

Russell and I were both working hard at our respective jobs in Minneapolis. We occupied the second floor of a duplex only three blocks from the campus of the University of Minnesota, and six mornings a week we said goodbye to each other on the steps of our house and went in opposite directions—Russell to a job as salesman in a downtown store, and I to the campus where I worked editing manuscripts on historical subjects.

Dorothy was employed at the May Seed and Nursery Company, and it was about this time that she began working with the Junior Seedsman club. I've no doubt that a good many of you have youngsters who enjoyed selling packets of seeds for May's, and when they wrote in to explain the premium they wanted, Dorothy was the one who took care of their letters. She remembered the names and ambitions of countless youngsters, and whenever we saw her she was full of stories about her job.

Frederick was a junior at Tarkio College at that time, and probably the busiest student on any campus! Not only did he carry his regular college courses, but he made several trips to distant cities to represent his school in debate. In those days travel by air wasn't as commonplace as it is today, and we were all excited when he took a plane to Oklahoma City for a contest of some kind. But no matter what the week's schedule might call for, Sunday always found Frederick back in Missouri where he had services to conduct—there were a few periods when he was practically an old-fashioned circuit preacher. Sometimes when the weather was nice Mother and Dad drove to hear him preach, and through these trips they made many new friends whom they enjoyed very much.

Wayne was employed at our local City National Bank, and if his younger brother and sister were under the impression that bank employees had a snap because they worked only from nine until three, Wayne's routine clarified that notion for them! Anyone living between our house and the bank could set his watch by Wayne in the morning, but evening was another story. And there were many nights too when he chose to stay down town and study the knotted complications of tax laws.

Margery was a senior in high school that year and anyone knows what a busy period that is! As always, all of the school activities led up to the big night of graduation, and for our family these events were of double interest because of the fact that Mother made the effort to attend. Most families take it absolutely for granted that Mother and Dad will be right there, but in our case it meant that Mother had to be taken in her wheelchair up three long flights of stairs.

Donald was a sophomore in high school that year, and I know he would be the first to laugh about his public speaking activities. That was the year he decided to compete in our



Dorothy and Frank on their wedding day, November 20, 1938

local declamatory contest with the reading that had started Frederick on his triumphant course as a public speaker, but perhaps there was something beyond the reading itself involved! Whatever the explanation Donald decided to devote his energies to music after that initial contest, and henceforth he was constantly busy with every glee club or chorus or quartet program that was given while he was a high school student.

During the summer months Frederick went to Estes Park where he worked in a YMCA camp and spent his leisure hours mountain climbing. Perhaps you recall in Dad's article about his western trip last summer what his sensations were when he looked at some of the mountains Frederick had climbed in 1938!

The summer also brought a nice time with Mother and Dad when they visited us in Minneapolis following their annual trip to Spirit Lake. I am happy to report that everything went off on schedule for that visit, and the only matter of regret was the fact that in my eagerness to give Dad lavish amounts of his two favorite foods, chicken gizzards and lettuce with sour-cream, I practically finished him for all time with both dishes! Margery was with the folks for that visit, and Dorothy arrived immediately following their departure and spent about three weeks. During her stay with us Frank flew up to Minneapolis for a weekend at our home, so all in all it was a summer of much visiting and many good times.

In September Margery entered Iowa State College at Ames as a Home Economics major. She was extremely homesick at first and pleaded with her Counsellor to arrange her schedule in such a way that she would be free every afternoon from one-thirty until two, and when pressed for an explanation she confessed that the reason she wanted to be free at that time was because she felt lonely and wanted to listen to her Mother on the radio! All of the other girls envied

Marge this immediate contact with home, needless to say.

One day in late November when I returned to my home from the office I found a letter from Mother that contained surprising news—Dorothy was married! When you come right down to it this shouldn't have surprised me in the least for Frank and Dorothy had known each other for more than two years, but there hadn't been any formal announcement of their intentions (to use an old-fashioned word!) and all in all I was what you might call unprepared for the news. Dorothy had always said that she wanted no formality of any kind, so her wedding was as simple as this:

On Sunday morning she went to church with Frank, they came back to the house for the usual Sunday chicken dinner, and also as usual, everyone pitched in and helped wash up the dishes, Dorothy included. Then she slipped upstairs and put on a pretty navy blue dress that had been purchased for the occasion, and at two o'clock came back downstairs and joined Frank in front of a small table that stood by the west windows in the living room. There were white roses on this table and white tapers burning—the only decorations. Reverend Peter Jacobs, pastor of our Congregational church, read the ceremony with our immediate family present, and Frank's sister and her husband who lived in Shenandoah at that time. Afterwards Mother served coffee and ice-cream, and then Dorothy and Frank slipped away for a short wedding trip. It was, as you see, the most simple of weddings, and these details that I have given you were what I read in Mother's letter that afternoon ten years ago.

When Dorothy and Frank returned from their wedding trip they moved into a furnished apartment here in Shenandoah and remained there for the three years that passed before they went to California.

In May of 1939 the members of our family who were then at home drove to Tarkio for the graduation exercises at which Frederick received his Bachelor of Arts degree. College graduations are always momentous events, but for one special reason Frederick's graduation was particularly momentous because we knew that very shortly he would leave to spend three years in Egypt.

As a rule it takes a number of months to complete negotiations for foreign work of any kind, and Frederick's case was no exception. He had started shortly after the first of the year to make arrangements for going to the American College in Assuit, Egypt, as a teacher in the English department, and I believe that it was about the first of May before the necessary transactions had been completed.

Mother and Dad had mingled feelings about this venture! They wanted Frederick to do what he wished the most to do, but at the same time they dreaded seeing him go so far away for such a long time. Although war clouds hung heavily on the horizon at that date they didn't know,



nor did any one else know, that before much more time had elapsed two of their other boys would be far away under conditions much more hazardous than teaching in Egypt.

But this was 1939 and Tarkio was a tranquil town far, far away from Egypt—and Egypt was still a remote country visited mainly by world travelers, missionaries and representatives of our State Department. Our world has shrunk so swiftly since then that it is difficult to return in memory to the sensations that all of us had when we knew that a member of our family was going so far away on a three-year contract. But those sensations were very real at the time and Mother and Dad experienced all of them as they sat in the auditorium and watched as Frederick was awarded his degree.

The weeks before he left were very busy ones. Trunks and boxes had to be packed, clothes had to be put into good condition (how were we to know that there were marvelous tailors in Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit!), and there were the hundred-and-one other things that had to be taken care of before departure. I mustn't forget too the farewell parties, the callers who wished him well, and the family gatherings. Russell and I made a trip down from Minneapolis to say goodbye, and certainly I didn't know then that it would be seven years before Frederick and I were to meet again.

At four o'clock on a July morning the Driftmier family arose full force to tell both Frederick and Wayne goodbye. Wayne had planned to take his annual two weeks' vacation at this time in order that he might go as far as New York with Frederick, so there were the two boys to get off with all of their luggage. A friend of Wayne's was making the trip with him, so the three boys were driving East together.

Fortunately it was a bright summer morning—Mother has said since then that she might have broken down if it had been dark and rainy. But it was the most cheerful morning imaginable, so Dad went into the house and got his camera—then he snapped the picture that you see on this page. A few moments later the boys were in the car, and then they had driven away. I don't know exactly how Mother and Dad felt as they turned around and went back into the house, but I can imagine!

The boys had a wonderful time in New York. They visited the World's Fair a number of times, saw practically all of the major points of interest, and wrote grand letters about all of it. In Frederick's letter written immediately after he had told Wayne goodbye he expressed grave doubt that "the boy would ever get back to Iowa safely" for it seems that Wayne had lost all of his traveler's cheques and that only Frederick's wisdom and greater experience had succeeded in tracking them down. There was a long recital of other mishaps as well, but it was probably a good thing that all of these scrapes took place because Frederick was so alarmed for Wayne's welfare, left to his own devices in a huge city, that



Off for Egypt! No one ever left our house with a collection of luggage comparable to Frederick's. The trunks and boxes are not included here.

he couldn't think about the fact that he was going away for three years.

The next letter from Frederick was posted in France, and since he has always been an exceptionally good correspondent there was much of interest in it, and in following letters written from Paris. He had the unusual experience of running into two old friends while he was in France, and they had some good times together. Then he took a train and went down into Italy where he expected to take the boat that would convey him to Egypt. There were tense days about that time, for while he was in Italy war was declared and we were all very uneasy until we received a cable stating that he was sailing. Then a few weeks later we had the first of our letters from Assuit, Egypt, and those of you who have been our friends for a number of years can almost pick up the story from there because we shared so many of the letters from Egypt with you.

But to return to Shenandoah and to pick up the thread of things once again. Wayne returned safe and sound from New York in spite of Frederick's ominous predictions and life settled back to normal. In September Margery left for Maryville where she entered the Northwest State Teachers' College. She had enjoyed her year at Ames but felt that she could get more comprehensive training in primary education at Maryville. None of us expressed any surprise when Margery decided to teach, for all of Dad's sisters were teachers, and all of Mother's sisters as well. You might almost say that it was a family tradition,

Just before Margery went away Mother made a change in her own work. Up until this time she had been broadcasting daily from KFNF, but in the years that had passed since Kitchen-Klatter first began, the family had sold their interests in KFNF and Mother was free to accept a new position on KMA. However, I suppose that few people have ever made a change that actually involved less complications, because Mother had been broadcasting from a little

room we've always called "the office" right in her own home since her accident, and it was simply a question of taking out one microphone and installing another. Everything went along as usual—I don't believe that Mother missed more than two or three broadcasts, if that many.

Donald was a senior in high school that fall. We've always had various combinations of the family at home since we've been grown, and that fall and winter the combination consisted of Mother and Dad, Howard, Wayne and Donald. Think of the shirts there were to iron and the baking there was to do! The men of our family have never been known as delicate eaters. But Mother has always really enjoyed cooking, and she has never minded ironing shirts (this is the truth!), so it was a quiet and enjoyable time. Of course Dorothy was right here in town and ran up every day, and Margery came home for a weekend about once a month, so Mother did have some feminine companionship.

The week before Christmas Russell and I arrived to spend a couple of days enroute to Arizona. I remember clearly how warm it was that autumn and early winter—we were driving through to Arizona and it seemed almost like spring. The morning we left Shenandoah, however, there was a long dark cloud on the northern horizon, and we kept just a short distance ahead of the first winter storm through all of our journey towards San Antonio. We spent that Christmas in El Paso (along with the first snow in twenty years!) and then went on to Tucson, Arizona. There we took a house right on the desert, and settled down.

The house that Russell and I took on the desert outside of Tucson was a curious, rambling affair that had been tampered with from time to time by the elderly owner, a woman who dreamed up the oddest "improvements" imaginable.

For instance, just before we moved in she had completed a really fine new bathroom with orchid colored fixtures, shower, and tiled walls and floor. That much was splendid, but for some bizarre reason she built this bathroom adjacent to the kitchen and constructed a partition only two feet high between the two rooms! Fortunately we didn't know a soul in Tucson and never entertained anyone—and come to think of it, that may be the explanation for the two-foot wall because no tenants would ever feel free to invite anyone; it's one way of discouraging a horde of visitors.

In late March of 1940 we left the desert and moved up into the Santa Rita mountains some forty miles from Tucson. This was by far the most secluded place we've ever lived, for we were in the heart of a pine forest where deer wandered up to our back door; we also understood from the owners of the cabin that there were bears in that area, and many were the nights we heard mountain lions wailing. We didn't have a telephone or radio, we didn't get mail unless we drove into Tucson for it (with an 80 mile round-trip to make you can see



how rarely we collected it), and we saw no one except the owners of our cabin. It is the only time I have ever lived so cut-off from the world, and I'll never forget how astounded I was when I learned, two weeks after it happened, that Germany had occupied Norway.

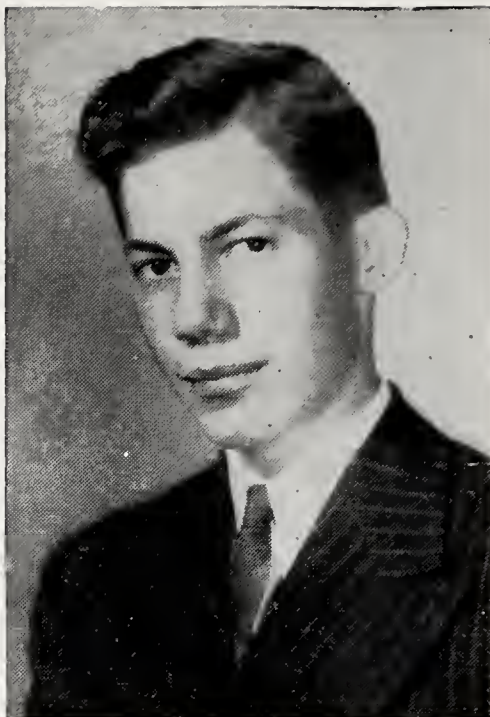
In May we returned to Iowa, and when we arrived at the family home we found that several changes had taken place. New hardwood floors were laid in the living room and dining room, a badly needed cupboard was built into the back hall that connects the kitchen with Mother's office, and a large window was cut into a downstairs closet. This amount of work meant that the house was torn up for several weeks, and Mother recalls one period when she didn't get beyond the kitchen and her office for seven or eight days.

Interesting letters came from Frederick during that time. He had gone to Alexandria, Egypt, to work with the YMCA during the summer months, and was assigned to front line duties. Before he arrived in Alexandria he had assumed that he would work with young volunteer soldiers, but instead of this he found himself living with a company of men who had been in the army of the Near East for years. It seemed to him at first that he would never make any headway with them, yet as time went on he made many friends and succeeded in getting men to church who hadn't attended a service for ten years. He went through the first of countless air-raids during those weeks in Alexandria, and of course our knowledge that he was working in the front lines didn't exactly put us at ease.

In June Mother, Dad and Margery went to Spirit Lake, and there they enjoyed the annual Kitchen-Klatter picnic and made new friends. As a rule the folks always came directly home from Spirit Lake, but this summer they drove down the Mississippi river and crossed over into Illinois to visit relatives at Toulon. Mother hadn't been there since the trip she made with Grandfather Field when Wayne and Margery were both babies, so she much enjoyed seeing her cousins again.

In July Dorothy took her two-weeks' vacation from the May Seed Company and went to Powell, Wyoming, to visit a college friend whom she hadn't seen for a number of years. At the same time Russell and I left for Hollywood, California, where we had decided to make our home. Shortly after we left, Wayne took his annual vacation in Salt Lake City, so for a short spell we were all at various points in the West.

In September of that year Donald enrolled as a freshman at Park College in Parkville, Missouri, and Margery entered the Northwest Missouri State Teachers' College at Maryville, Missouri, for her junior year. This was the first time in almost a quarter of a century that Mother and Dad hadn't had children in their local public schools, and they felt lost through all of September; it seemed almost uncanny to have four o'clock come without someone hurrying in from



Donald's high school graduation picture, May, 1939.

school. Wayne and Howard were the only children at home that year, and of course they both worked and were gone from the house all day. Fortunately Dorothy was still living in Shenandoah at that time, and her daily visits helped do away with the empty feeling.

The last major changes that have been made to our family home were completed in the late autumn of 1940. Two new rooms were built on to the west of the house. One of these was a sunroom that was connected with the living room by a wide doorway, and the other was a downstairs bedroom with doors opening into both the sunroom and our small office. Both rooms were needed, but of the two the bedroom was the more indispensable for it meant that Mother no longer had to make the difficult trip upstairs to bed every night. This amount of building meant that the house was torn up for weeks, and since Mother had just recuperated from the spring session of improvements she was truly happy when the last workmen departed and they could settle back to normal.

To a certain extent the months that lay between the autumn of 1940 and the autumn of 1941 were the end of an era in our family life. This was true of countless other families, I am certain. Time brings many changes to all homes, but in the course of ordinary events these changes come about subtly and imperceptibly; event flows quietly into event. Anyone telling the story of a typical family would be hard pressed to place his finger on a given moment and say that at such and such a time the family passed from one era of its life into another. Yet in our case, and probably in your case as well, we can put our finger on one date, December 7th, 1941, and say that it was the dividing line.

I can tell you exactly where we were in December of 1941. Howard was at home for a weekend, some-

thing that didn't happen too often for he had sold out his interests in the mill a short time earlier and was traveling for one of our local seed companies. I was at home on a short visit, the first I had made since we moved to California the year before. I learned, after I reached Shenandoah, that I had passed Frank, Dorothy's husband, for he was on his road to the Coast where he expected to locate. Dorothy had given up her apartment when Frank left, and planned to stay with the folks until I returned to Hollywood just before Christmas. She expected to drive out with Russell and me to visit Frank, and then when she completed some business obligations in Shenandoah she planned to move to California.

Frederick was rounding out his second year in Egypt, and the folks were looking forward to the end of his three-year stay when they thought that he would be home again for a visit. During the summer of 1941 he had gone down into Africa on a vacation, and his letters about that trip were wonderfully interesting. Wayne was a student at the Iowa State College in Ames. He had enrolled in the department of economics in September with the intention of completing his college work without any further interruptions. Margery was a senior in Maryville and Donald was a sophomore at Park College. For the first time in their entire married life, Mother and Dad were alone as a permanent thing—I'm not counting any short visits that some of us might be making.

On the afternoon of December 7th those of us who were at home were dressing to attend a Driftmier family gathering at the home of Aunt Adelyn and Uncle Albert Rope. We had the radio turned on to the New York Philharmonic Concert and were listening to it as casually as thousands of others were listening. Suddenly the program was interrupted with the news announcement that no one can ever forget—and that was the dividing line.

After we had heard the initial radio announcement regarding the attack on Pearl Harbor we sat around the living room speculating, wondering and worrying just as millions of other people did. We knew that if the war lasted any length of time at all it would take the four boys from our family—and I can honestly say that none of us thought for one moment that it would be a short war. The handwriting of what lay ahead was clearly on the wall, and we knew that the formal declaration of war would be only a formality—that as of Sunday afternoon, December 7th, we actually were at war.

As I said before, we were dressing to go to a family gathering at Aunt Adelyn and Uncle Albert Rope's when the news came through, so we went ahead with our plans. But it was the most subdued family party imaginable. As a rule the Driftmiers are a cheerful and verbose crowd when they get together, but that afternoon and early evening was a radical exception. If any of you friends attended family



gatherings on that day you can pretty well imagine what ours was like.

About the middle of December Russell drove back from Hollywood to get me, and we took time for a short trip to Minneapolis. On our return to Shenandoah we picked up Dorothy and started back to California. I guess that none of us will ever forget the details of that particular trip because Russell had to be back in Hollywood at eight o'clock on Christmas Eve, and we left Shenandoah about nine o'clock on the morning of the 21st. We drove as far as Gallup, New Mexico without making a single stop except to eat. Furthermore, we ran into a terrible sleet storm just out of Albuquerque, and had to drive mountain roads on a solid sheet of ice. It was awful!

Weather conditions were so bad from Albuquerque west that we didn't reach the California border until midnight of the 23rd. There, for the first time, we noticed evidence of war. Armed soldiers stopped us at the bridge across the Colorado river, and we drove with our lights off at their orders. Giant searchlights swept the river ceaselessly, and the atmosphere felt very much like grim readiness.

I must mention too that all the way across U.S. 66 we met countless cars with California license plates hurrying Eastward. At the border we learned that they were checking out over 1,000 cars daily, and of course the explanation for this is the fact that in the first few months of the war the Pacific coast expected to be attacked, and thousands of people left while the going was good. Under those conditions it seemed curious to be going to the area from which other people were fleeing.

It was seven o'clock on the morning of the 24th when we left Dorothy happily with Frank, and turned our tired car toward the other side of Hollywood—and home. The doorway to our house was almost buried in masses of blooming poinsettias, and it was good to be back in California again.

I think that poor Dorothy will never be able to remember that trip without thinking of rain. It poured and poured all day and all night throughout her entire visit. People began to get nervous about the amount of rain, and one reason for their alarm was the fact that an immense dam sits right above Hollywood—should its great curved bow of concrete give 'way, the bulk of Hollywood would find itself in the Pacific ocean. In view of this you can imagine everyone's sensations when the evening paper arrived one night with the huge headline, "Hollywood Dam Holding." I've always thought that was the single most unnecessary headline I have ever read!

At the end of ten days Dorothy departed, in a torrential downpour, and Russell, Frank and I were left to represent the family on the Coast. Frank was working at Lockheed, and since he had gone in there before Pearl Harbor he was considered an



Mother snapped this as Dorothy and Dad left for California on a February morning in 1942. They took turns driving and had a very pleasant trip.

old veteran at the plant before much more time had passed.

In January Wayne enlisted in the U.S. Army as a Private. He started out to accomplish this on January 2nd, but a severe blizzard swept the State on that date and his bus had to turn back. The next day he made another attempt that ended in failure, so it was actually January 11th when the Army claimed him for its own. Probably there were many men who found themselves shifted about with equal rapidity, but it's doubtful if any of them moved faster than Wayne; he was only at Fort Des Moines from January 11th to February 6th, and he never had an opportunity to see Mother after he left home in early January. When he left for Angel Island on February 6th he telephoned them to say goodbye—they were not to see him again until May of 1945.

Our story now will take us back and forth at a great rate! With nine people to account for during the



This is the apartment house in Hollywood where we lived for almost three years. Frank and Dorothy had the upper apartment on the left, and Russell and I had the lower apartment on the right.

war years you can imagine how much coming and going there was.

In early February, 1942 several things happened to those of us who were on the Coast. Frank was busy looking for a nice place that he could be settled in when Dorothy arrived to live in California, and one evening he turned up at our house with astounding news: only a short block down the street from where we were living he had found a handsome four-plex with two vacancies in it—one large apartment upstairs and one downstairs. Didn't we want to go and look at it?

Well, we did, and the upshot of

the matter was that before we left we had made arrangements to move in on March 5th—Dorothy and Frank upstairs, Russell and I downstairs. Both apartments were lovely, and we were all thrilled to have separate living quarters so close together. We also decided not to tell Dorothy about it, but to have her arrive at our downstairs apartment, and then when she expressed eagerness to see her home, trot her upstairs!

Also, in early February I went to work in the financial division of the American Red Cross, Los Angeles Chapter. This meant an hour's ride on the streetcar (three transfers!) both morning and night, but it was interesting work and I thoroughly enjoyed it. However, I did regret one thing and that was the fact that we were busy moving (a job made infinitely complicated because I was working) when Dad and Dorothy arrived. They drove out together from Shenandoah because Dorothy wanted their car in California, and of course Mother and Dad didn't want her to make the trip alone. Those of you who were reading Kitchen-Klatter in 1942 will recall Dad's interesting series of articles about this trip that he titled Across the Plains In 1942.

As you can imagine, it was a joyous reunion for all of us when they drove in. Dorothy was properly astounded to find that we had apartments in the same building, and she was also happy to see Boletta, Russell's sister who had come out from Minneapolis to visit us. All in all, we were quite a family when we gathered together for our first meal in the new apartment.

That meal will never be forgotten because just as we were starting to eat the roast and baked potatoes our former landlady came running in breathlessly to tell us that "Mr. Driftmier was wanted, long distance, at once." He hurried up the street to our former home where the call had come through, and when he returned to a cold dinner it was with the news that he was leaving early the next morning for San Francisco to tell Wayne goodbye. The call had been from Wayne—he was leaving Angel Island for points unknown on March 9th (his birthday) and felt that he had to see Dad before he left.

It was a disappointment to all of us that Dad had to leave on such short notice for we hadn't really gotten half-way started on all the things we wanted to show him, but obviously all of this was inconsequential stacked up against the fact that Wayne was leaving soon for service at an unknown point.

We sat around and visited until nearly midnight, and the next morning were all up bright and early to take Dad to the bus station. He was eager to take the Coast route up to San Francisco for he had driven that highway eighteen years earlier and remembered it as a highly interesting and scenic trip. Later he told us that almost the entire highway had been rebuilt, and that many places he could see stretches of the old road he had driven.



Wayne had given him complete instructions for reaching him at Fort McDowell, an island several miles northeast of San Francisco in the bay. After the usual difficulties (I'm sure that no one ever got a pass on the first try!) he took passage on a Government boat that made the run between Fort Mason and Fort McDowell, and when he reached his destination he found Wayne waiting for him at the dock.

They came back into San Francisco together, had a wonderful afternoon in Golden Gate park where they went through the DeYoung Museum, and then ate dinner and later saw a movie. About eleven o'clock Wayne had to leave for Fort Mason, so Dad went with him and stood on the dock while they lined up the soldiers to take the ferry. He told Wayne goodbye then, and waited until the boat disappeared before he turned and walked away. He has told us since then that if ever he wanted to turn back the hands of Time it was at that moment—he would have given the world to be able to step back to the evenings when the boys were little fellows and running to meet him when he came home from the store. It all seemed unreal to say goodbye to one of those boys late at night on a dock far, far from home, with all the dangers and uncertainties of war lying ahead.

When Dad left us in Los Angeles to go and tell Wayne goodbye in San Francisco, he tentatively promised us that he would return and spend another week with us, but I can't honestly say that Dorothy and I were surprised when he wired us that he was leaving San Francisco immediately for Shenandoah. We knew that after he said goodbye to Wayne he'd be doubly eager to get back and see Mother—and he certainly was. Less than twenty-four hours after he parted from Wayne he was on a Western Pacific train and headed for home. Dorothy and I always had a big list of things we planned to do when the folks came to visit us in California, but none of it ever came to pass. Dad didn't return to California until August of last year, and Mother's first visit didn't take place until January of this year—and Dorothy and I were both settled in Iowa!

Only about two weeks after Dad left us we went through our single most nerve-wracking experience on the West Coast when the Los Angeles area was subjected to some kind of an aerial disturbance that was never cleared up to everyone's satisfaction. It was officially confirmed and officially denied that enemy planes were over the city that night! At the time it happened I wanted to write about it in my monthly letter, but it didn't seem wise to do so, particularly when we learned that an account of it never did appear in magazines or newspapers throughout the country. However, those times with all their precautions have long since been left behind, so I can feel free to tell you briefly what happened.



We didn't know on Thanksgiving Day in 1941 how soon Pearl Harbor would be upon us. Lucile is next to Mother and Dorothy is in the middle. Donald and Wayne, both home from college for the holiday, are standing behind.

When Russell came home from work about one o'clock on the morning of February 26th he awakened me to tell me that Los Angeles was blacked out. The air-raid sirens had blown fifteen minutes earlier and the city was plunged almost immediately into total darkness. Those of you who are familiar with that huge city can appreciate how remarkable it was that in only a few minutes all of its many miles could be turned from glittering brightness to impenetrable blackness.

We sat in the living room marveling at how strange it seemed not to see a light anywhere when all of a sudden there was a dull, heavy thud from far away. A couple of minutes later there was another thud. For the first time it occurred to us that those heavy booming thuds were bombs, and yet it seemed completely incredible; like all residents of the Coast we hadn't actually been able to make ourselves believe that we *could* be bombed. A short time later there was another boom, much closer, and then simultaneously the sound of many guns firing filled the air and our landlady came running downstairs screaming, "Oh come quick, they're bombing Long Beach!"

We hurried upstairs to our landlady's balcony (we were high enough to have a wide view there) and Frank and Dorothy joined us. We stood there for a long time and watched a dazzling spectacle. The sky was so brilliantly illuminated with hundreds of giant searchlights that it was light enough to read a newspaper, and on top of this was the glow made by a never-ending stream of tracer bullets plus the quick flashes of exploding shells. High above the city we could see a flight of planes caught in the central beam of the searchlights; this seemed to be the target for all of the

shells were directed at the core of the light.

After about forty-five minutes the firing ceased and we all left the balcony and returned to our various apartments. There was no doubt in anyone's mind but what the Long Beach area had been heavily bombed, and I'm sure that everyone in the city was tense and heartsick. We thought that whatever had happened was all over for the night, but about a half-hour later it all began again with renewed intensity, and this time the anti-aircraft guns fired continuously without a second's let-up. Our apartment was illuminated by the flashes just as though we were experiencing a severe electrical storm in the middlewest. This came as a great shock to us for we hadn't dreamed that our quiet streets of homes and gardens concealed big guns so close at hand.

It was after four in the morning before silence descended. At about eight o'clock the all-clear siren blew and I started to work, but before I had gotten on the big down-town bus (my second transfer) the air-raid warning blew again and all traffic halted. You can imagine the fevered conversation and alarm that morning—I've never experienced anything like it before or since. Everyone was wild to get the first newspapers, but they only left people more excited and disturbed because the accounts were full of contradictions. However, no one was ashamed to admit that he had been scared to death for without exception everyone believed that the city had been subjected to an air-raid. A Red Cross employee in our office who had been through some of the heaviest London bombings told us that he thought the city had been bombed—that it was difficult to distinguish anti-aircraft fire from bombs unless you were close enough to feel the concussion.



So far as I know Los Angeles was the only city in the United States that had a comparable experience during the war. We had a number of black-outs and unexplained incidents, but that was the only time the anti-aircraft guns opened up. It was weeks before the city relaxed, and I've often thought how miraculous it was that our one terror-filled night turned out to be the only one. We certainly had much to be grateful for there on the West Coast.

March 9th Wayne sailed for Hawaii from Fort McDowell. That was his birthday, and when his ship sailed under Golden Gate bridge he hadn't the faintest notion in the world what his destination might be aside from the fact that it would be someplace in the Pacific.

Before much more time passed a letter from Mother brought the news that Donald expected to enlist in the Aircorps at the conclusion of his college work in June. Wayne was already in Hawaii, so this left only Frederick and Howard with indefinite plans. Frederick was winding up his third and last year as a member of the American College faculty in Assuit, Egypt, and for many months the folks had been anticipating his return to this country. He was in rather poor health (although not nearly so badly off as he was to be a short time later) and they felt uneasy about him, particularly since he had been in the front lines of the desert campaign the previous summer. Those of you who were reading Kitchen-Klatter back in those days may recall the unusually interesting letters that Frederick wrote about his experiences in Khartoum, Sudan, Cairo, Alexandria and other places.

Those of us on the Coast had one thing happening after another to keep us out of any kind of a rut. Boletta's wedding was one of those things. She is Russell's only sister and had come out to visit us in December from her home in Minneapolis. It was her parents' intention, plus our expectation, that she would stay about three months or so and then return to Minneapolis. But things didn't work out that way! Her boyhood friend, John Solstad, was stationed in San Diego with the marines, and at every possible opportunity he made the trip up to Hollywood to see her. Russell and I, old married people of five-years' standing, looked at them with an indulgent eye and regretted the fact that at any moment he might be shipped out and they would be separated for goodness knows how long. But we didn't reckon correctly with youth and war!

One Sunday afternoon they came to us and told us they intended to be married immediately before John could be sent away. I'll skip over what we said and then what they said and all the rest of it, and come right to the point that they were married in the living room of our home at eight o'clock on a beautiful spring evening. We'd gone out in the mountains the day before and picked a carload of



At Mother's and Dad's absolute insistence Howard had this picture taken when he was home on furlough in 1944.

yellow mimosa; the room was transformed into a lovely garden by these exquisite flowers. We had lighted tapers burning on the mantle, a nice wedding cake, and all of the other touches that a home wedding really needs. John was a very serious nineteen-year old in his dress uniform, and Boletta was equally serious although she was only seventeen. After the ceremony Dorothy helped me serve, then we telephoned wires to both sets of parents in Minneapolis, and thus was concluded the only war wedding that Russell and I ever witnessed, and the only wedding ceremony that has ever been performed in our home.

So many families knew similar experiences that I want to skip ahead in time and tell you what happened to this young couple for I always felt they could stand as the classic case of marriage and war. In due time our worst fears were realized and John was shipped out. He had been stationed at Guadalcanal almost three weeks before he received word that his daughter, Kristin, had been born in Minneapolis. And she was just about three years old before he saw her for the first time. Those three years covered I don't know how many major engagements; I know that he began on Guadalcanal and finished at Okinawa—that gives you an idea. But somehow he returned without a scratch, and then for the first time they could really settle down into the marriage that began in Hollywood on a spring night in 1942.

Shortly after Boletta was married Dorothy decided that she wanted to go to work. The prospect of staying quietly at home had appealed to her when she first arrived in California for she had always worked since her marriage and thought that it would be nice to concentrate on being a housewife. But days in an apartment are long, and I wasn't around for company at all because I left the house at seven every morning and didn't return until six in the evening.

It didn't take Dorothy very long to decide that she wanted more to do, so by the end of May or thereabouts she had started working in one of the Lockheed offices.

It's been a long time now since the words "swing shift" were a part of our vocabularies (I know that just the sound of those words must call up a million memories to many people!), but when I look back at it I think that it was a crazy way to live! At the time we took it for granted. I didn't see Dorothy except on Sundays even though we lived within calling distance of each other. At 3.15 every day she and Frank started out for Lockheed—the swing shift ran from 4:00 until 12:00. It's plain to be seen, when you recall the hours of my departures and arrivals back at the house that we would never see each other. Furthermore, I saw Russell only from 6:00 in the evening until 8:00. At that time he left for work, and since he didn't return until around 2:30 I was long since in bed and asleep when he came in—and of course he was in bed and asleep when I left in the morning. Yes, that was a crazy routine now that I look back on it.

The four of us, Russell, Frank, Dorothy and I tried to have Sunday dinner together. Then we caught up on all the news, exchanged letters from home, and, until gas rationing prevented it, took a Sunday drive together.

In July we received word that Donald had enlisted at Fort Crook on July 29th. He had hoped to become a crew member of a bomber, but his eyesight prevented this and he was assigned to the Aircorps as a weather observer. This entailed exacting training and in the process of getting it he was shipped about from Wichita Falls, Texas to Waco, Texas, from Waco up to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and thence to Chanute Field at Rantoul, Illinois. The rest of us could never keep up with his various moves and simply relied upon the folks to keep us posted as to his whereabouts.

At about the time we heard that Donald had entered the Aircorps we heard that Frederick would be unable to return to this country as he had planned to do for so long. A letter from him dated July 23, 1942 stated that he had gone to Asmara, Eritrea (the Estes Park of Africa) for a short vacation. In that letter he described several battlefields and a number of British victories over the Italians, but he also took time to write that there were great baboon herds in that part of the country, and that whenever he took walks the baboons threw stones at him. He commented that they threw well, too!

Censorship was so rigid throughout the war that it was difficult to figure out just where Frederick was stationed the bulk of the time and what he was doing, but after this particular letter from Eritrea we got the idea that he was serving with the YMCA as a chaplain. His work dealt chiefly with prisoners of war (Italians and



Germans taken by the British) and later, when he returned to this country, he had many stories of great interest to tell.

In October of 1942 Howard enlisted in the Army as a Private. He was the last of the four boys to go, and understandably so for he was thirty-three years old and, as he said, pretty ancient material for the Army. He enlisted at Fort Dodge and then was sent to Camp Adair in Oregon for his basic training. This made the third time that Mother had received a box of clothing, civilian clothing, from an army camp, and she always said that it was the one single thing that made her break down and cry. There was something so terribly final about it.

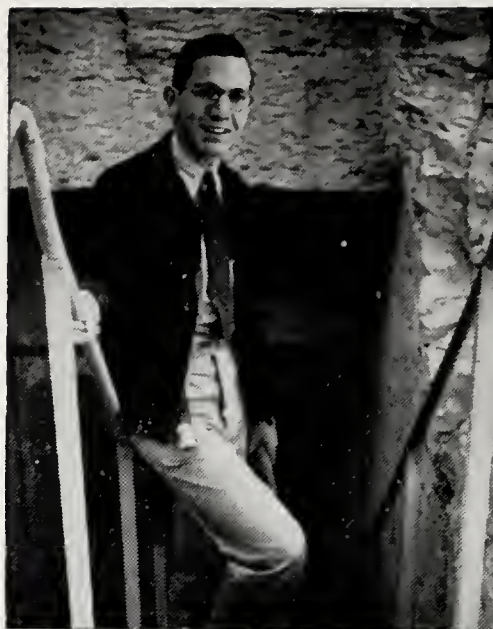
The summer of 1942 was a hectic one for those of us who lived in Hollywood. But there were some nice times sandwiched in, and I am sure that our most pleasant holiday fell on the Fourth of July when we drove up into the mountains near Saugus, California (old mining country) and had a marvelous picnic on a tiny island in the middle of a rushing mountain stream. It was the kind of a picnic that you never forget, that you always remember with a sense of nostalgia throughout the years.

There is another vivid memory associated with that particular holiday and it concerns what to us was an unexplainable phenomena.

For many weeks the Los Angeles area had been in a period of considerable tension because of air-raid alarms. We were completely without radio service in the evenings; all stations left the air at eight o'clock and did not resume broadcasting until eight the next morning. A number of times the alarms had come at really upsetting hours—I recall sitting in a crowded restaurant at 12:30 when every air-raid siren in the city began to wail and the noon crowds were panic-stricken. It is impossible to describe the ominous and eerie noise made by those deep-throated sirens—it was the voice of doom itself. And although most sections of the country had practice air-raid alarms, you must remember that in Los Angeles we were always prepared for the fact that this particular alarm might be IT, might mean an actual bombing raid.

For days before the Fourth of July the newspapers entreated all citizens to stay away from the beaches. Military authorities were definitely afraid that enemy planes might choose that time to make a surprise attack and machine-gun the beaches; furthermore, there was no way to sound an effective warning along the beach and people would have no chance to escape should such an attack actually occur. Russell, Frank, Dorothy and I were grimly impressed by these warnings and planned to stay far away.

To get to our highway that ran up into the mountains we had to drive down to the ocean and then turn inland. I can honestly say that we didn't expect to see a soul on the beach, so you can imagine our aston-



Frederick is headed for his subterranean offices near Alexandria, Egypt in 1942.

ishment when we found ourselves looking at the biggest crowd we had ever seen near the water! Lined up along the highway as far as the eye could see were motor-cycle police ready at an instant's warning to turn on their sirens—it was the only possible method of notifying the crowd that there were enemy planes approaching. To say that the sight was disturbing is putting it mildly. We looked at that solid mass of humanity and tried not to think what would happen if they were suddenly caught—the ocean on one side, a sheer rock wall on the other side with only narrow staircases leading up to the highway. We learned the next day that the newspapers estimated a crowd of between 18,000 and 20,000 at the beaches, and we still marvel at the complete disregard for all common sense that would take people to such a place in spite of the most serious warnings.

At the end of September I wrote to the folks and told them that I had left my work in the financial offices of the Red Cross, Los Angeles Chapter. No, I wasn't tired of my routine that called for leaving the house at seven in the morning and returning at six in the evening. No, my work was satisfactory and I hadn't been fired! But I had an excellent reason for retiring to the role of a housewife—we expected to present Mr. and Mrs. Driftmier and Mr. and Mrs. Verness with their first grandchild the following March. I don't know of a better reason for giving up a job!

Among the first gifts that arrived after we made our announcement was a box from Hawaii. Wayne said in an accompanying letter that it was his initial experience in buying baby gifts and he hadn't known what in the world to select, but we thought that he had shown excellent judgment in getting a blue blanket and a matching bootee, jacket and hood set. I wrote to Wayne every week without fail and had many interesting letters in return. He spent over a year in Hawaii, and during that time mail went back and

forth without much difficulty. Later it was a different story.

The autumn of that year passed by very swiftly. We spent the weekend before Thanksgiving at a cabin in the Big Bear mountains near Lake Arrowhead, and how we wished Mother might have been with us, for that was her old camping territory where she had spent so many happy times as a young woman. On that trip we also went to Redlands and took pictures of the old Field home to send back.

One day in early December the telephone rang and it was Mother with exciting news—they had just received word that Frederick was in Miami, Florida and would be home soon. This was totally unexpected for they hadn't anticipated his return for at least a year, if then. And, everything considered, it is fortunate that they didn't know in advance about his return, for when they heard the details later they knew that they would have worried a great deal had they known how things were really going with him.

The reason for Frederick's return was illness. During his first year in Egypt he had contracted a form of tropical dysentery and had been hospitalized many times for treatment, none of which seemed to improve his condition in the least. In November he became violently ill and the specialists who were called into consultation said that nothing further could be done for him in any Egyptian hospital and that he would have to return to the United States for treatment if he expected to recover.

It was a difficult thing to travel any distance during that stage of the war, but arrangements were made to get him on to a British plane that was flying to Khartoum. There he was turned over to a group of American pilots who were returning to the United States after ferrying planes to Africa. They were flying the return trip in a stripped-down bomber and it was about as comfortable for a long journey as a stage-coach. Before they reached Liberia on the Gold Coast Frederick became desperately ill, so he was removed from the plane there and hospitalized until he had sufficient strength to be placed on another plane, also a stripped-down bomber. Their route took them across the Atlantic to South America, and thence to Miami where the plane landed and where Frederick sent his wire to the folks. A short time later he was home, thin as a ghost and obviously ill, but safely home.

Of course we were all extremely eager to see him. Howard champed at the bit up in Oregon because he couldn't get a furlough, and Wayne was down in the dumps for a few days out in Hawaii. I knew very well that I could never make the trip, and so it was Dorothy who combined a business trip along with a visit to the folks in early January of 1943—and got to see Frederick. Margery was teaching in Pella that year and spent a weekend with the folks, and Donald managed a ten-day furlough at about the same time, so there was a small family reunion to welcome him home.

It was on this trip that Dorothy announced her own impending en-



gagement with the stork, and before she returned to California some of her old friends had a baby shower for her. I could scarcely wait for her to come back to Hollywood and bring all of the news about Frederick and the rest of the family, so it was a happy night when we drove to the Union station to meet her train.

Dorothy had a wonderful collection of what we've always called "Frederick's stories" when she returned to Hollywood from her short visit in Shenandoah. Some people have the faculty of making a small, trivial event seem momentarily interesting, and Frederick is such a person. He could walk down town right here in Shenandoah and return with something to report that was hilariously funny, so you can imagine what he had to say after three-and-a-half years spent in many places thousands of miles from home. How I envied Dorothy the opportunity to hear those stories first-hand while they were still so fresh in his memory! I had to wait another four years or so before I heard some of them directly from him.

As far as Dorothy and I were concerned the first part of 1943 was given over almost exclusively to the subject of babies. As a matter of fact, it was quite a baby-conscious time for the family because two of our cousins had babies at approximately the same time. Louise Fischer Alexander, who lived in Santa Monica during that period, had her second child, a boy named Carter Frederick, in the previous September and she was right at hand to be consulted. Dorothy and I put so much reliance in Louise's judgment and opinions that you would have thought she was the mother of a good round dozen! Then in New York City Mary Fischer Chapin had her first son, Elliott Field, on December 12th, and how the letters did fly back and forth between New York and Hollywood! We four cousins had a great deal to say to each other on the one all-important subject: BABIES.

From my correspondence with you friends I know that many of you had your children in big cities during the war years, and I guess that none of us can ever forget all of the difficulties involved. Dorothy and I had the same specialist and we learned early in the game that nothing could be done simply and matter-of-factly. Fancy appointment cards were issued to us at each visit to the Medical Building, but the hour specified on the card meant nothing! Any day which called for a trip to the doctor meant that the entire day was given over to it. Not only did we have a long drive through heavy traffic from Hollywood to the heart of Los Angeles, but once we had arrived we could plan to sit from one ice-age to the next ice-age while we waited for our appointment—if you could call any session an "appointment" that fell several hours after the designated time.

We learned too that it was extremely unwise to utter one squeak of complaint about those long waits. The doctors themselves were never present to listen, but their starched and



Juliana was three weeks old when she posed for this picture with her proud mother.

crisp nurses were right on deck to take care of any ungrateful remarks. Dorothy and I were always threatening to pack box lunches for those expeditions, but we never quite summoned up the courage to affront the nurses in such a bold fashion. Those were the days too of terrific shortages in every line. To buy diapers you had to know someone who knew someone whose second cousin was a clerk at such-and-such a store and if you would come down and stand in line on such-and-such a morning she might be able to get you one dozen diapers. Yes, those were hectic days!

Juliana was born at 12:08 on the noon of February 25th at the Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Hollywood, and the most important thing seemed to be the fact that my doctor could get right out to lunch before he returned to his offices at one o'clock to take care of the ten o'clock appointments! However, the most important thing in my own mind was the fact that I actually had a girl. Some women in this world are foolish enough to set their hearts on a girl or a boy to the absolute exclusion of the other sex, and I was such a woman. I had told everyone that I wanted a boy because I felt that it was risky business to voice such a strong hope as I felt for a girl! I knew better, of course, but then you sometimes do weakminded things during those nine months. It took me a full week to believe that the single greatest wish of my life had come true—I had a girl!

One reason that it took me a week to get this firmly through my mind was because I was so busy. Now that sounds mighty funny, everything considered, but I look back on the week spent at the Cedars of Lebanon as the busiest week of my life. The day's activities started at 4:00 in the morning in that mammoth institution, and it was always after 11:00 at night be-

fore things quieted down. I never even managed to read the daily paper, something I always contrived to get done at home. I can't think, looking back, why in the world things were always in such an uproar, but the fact remains that it was an unforgettably busy week.

And before I close this subject I must tell you one amusing thing from which I derived great satisfaction at the time. It seemed to me that in 1943 all prospective mothers were about sixteen, wore bobby socks, pinned ribbons in their hair and looked as though they belonged in high school, not in a maternity ward. I was thirty-two when Juliana was born and I felt confident that I'd be highly conspicuous sandwiched in between three dewy-cheeked girls. Well, as matters turned out I was conspicuous because of my youth! On one side of me was a woman of forty who took her first-born home on her 16th wedding anniversary. On the other side was a woman in her late thirties also going home with her first, and over in the corner was a mere slip of a girl thirty-seven with her third daughter. Things never turn out as you expect!

In April I had a letter from Wayne telling me about an experience of his that took place on the third of April. That was Mother's birthday, and Wayne wanted to telephone her from Hawaii to wish her a happy day. He had to file notice of this quite some time in advance and list the people to whom he expected to talk in order that the censors might investigate and then clear the call. Now at that time only Frederick was at home, so Wayne listed Mother, Dad and Frederick as the people with whom he expected to converse.

Right on schedule the call went through and Wayne was overjoyed to hear Mother's voice. Then, in rapid succession, he talked with Dad and Frederick, and just as Frederick said goodbye a woman's voice said, "Hello, Wayne, this is Aunt Sue." Instantly the line went dead! Wayne was left standing there with the receiver in his hand, positively no one at the other end. Aunt Sue was an unknown quantity to the censors and for all they knew she might be one of Hitler's arch-spies with every seemingly innocent word conveying tons of information.

It was about this time too that Howard started writing a series of remarkably interesting letters regarding his experiences in the Oregon training camp. But if Howard's letters were amusing, his conversation was doubly so. The first time he came to see us in Hollywood (I'm skipping ahead in my story right now) he told us a story that struck me as one of the funniest I'd ever heard. It seems that Howard didn't weather the terrifically heavy training program too well, and one day on a twenty-mile forced march he just naturally decided that he'd rather lie down and die than move one more step. Consequently he sat down on a rock near the road and prepared to sit *ad infinitum*. About that time a car filled with officers came up and asked him what



he was doing, just sitting there. He replied that he couldn't walk one more step—that was all. They got him into the car and drove him back to camp—they actually felt sorry for him! I know that it doesn't sound funny, but if you could have heard Howard's account of it you would have doubled up with laughter too.

Both Donald and Howard were able to get furloughs in the spring of 1943 and visit the folks and Frederick—he was the only one of us children living at home during that period. Donald came up from Waco, Texas where he was serving as a weather forecaster in the army, and only a few days after he left Shenandoah he notified the folks that he was to be sent to Grand Rapids, Michigan to complete another phase of his training program. Furthermore, he had been told that when this period of his training was completed he would be sent overseas—and that was the height of Donald's ambition—to get overseas.

Howard made his trip from Camp Adair in Oregon. By this time he had been elevated to the exalted role of a corporal in the 382nd Infantry. I write it in this fashion because Howard's experiences in the army, from beginning to end, were always recounted with such a wry sense of humor that it was impossible not to laugh. A little later on I want to tell you about one specific incident that happened to him when he was stationed in the front lines at some point in the Philippines, but right now I want to mention the fact that this particular furlough was made on what Howard always called a "cinder shaker"—meaning a train that probably saw its first run before the turn of the century. Every hour of his short furlough was priceless to him, but almost half of his time was consumed on the old cinder shaker that literally crawled through the miles between Oregon and Iowa. Dorothy and I were chronically hopeful that Howard would be transferred to some camp in southern California where we could see him from time to time, but another year was to pass before this happened.

When Juliana was about nine weeks old we had the first blackout that Los Angeles had experienced for a number of months. It came on a Sunday night around eight o'clock, and to us it was more alarming than the others because we now had a baby to think about and try to protect. There was precious little that anyone could do in the line of protection for there was simply no place to go—California houses are built without basements, you know, so when the air-raid sirens blew one had to make his peace with the fact that there could be nothing between himself and possible bombs except a thin, California-construction type of roof.

In our apartment there was only one place that seemed to offer a shred of security and that was a large closet built directly underneath a staircase. It was big enough to accommodate Juliana's bassinet, so we wheeled her in there and hoped for the best. No gunfire was heard that



Dorothy was an equally proud mother when Kristin was three weeks old.

night, but the sky was ablaze with brilliant searchlights and we could hear many planes above us. It was not for us mortals to know what those planes were after because no explanations were ever made, so like thousands of others we just sat on our front steps in the darkness, listened to them, hoped they were our own planes and that they would settle whatever it was that had forced them up to fly above the blacked-out city for a couple of hours.

A short time after this we had an experience that was as mystifying as the never-to-be-forgotten February night in 1942 that I told you about not long ago. I am positive that this was never known outside of Los Angeles, and certainly I never made a reference to it in any letters written to you during that period. This incident occurred in the early summer of 1943 and, so far as I know, was the last totally mysterious and unexplained incident of the war years so far as southern California was concerned.

One evening just at dusk a big bomber was sighted flying at a fairly low altitude above Glendale. Now the sky was rarely empty of planes, including big bombers, so the thing that made this unusual was the fact that suddenly a squadron of P-38 fighter planes rose from the ground, and within a few minutes thousands of people rushed out of their houses to see why there was so much gunfire above them. In utter amazement they watched a spectacular dog-fight between the bomber and the fighter planes—and no doubt the people who were struck by shell casings felt something a little stronger than utter amazement! During this fight the bomber continued on its course in the direction of the big Lockheed plant, but about a mile from there it turned suddenly and disappeared into the dusk.

In no time at all there was a special edition out with blazing headlines about the mystery bomber. According to the newspapers this plane was first sighted above Los Angeles—it was

moving towards Glendale and the Lockheed plant. When it refused to answer an air-force demand to identify itself the P-38's were sent up—three times the P-38's demanded that it identify itself and on the third refusal the fighter planes opened fire. Then began the dog-fight that thousands of people watched, and it ended, as I said, when the bomber suddenly turned and disappeared.

Well, that's all I can tell you! There was never again any reference to it in the papers. One person's guess was as good as another's. However, everyone was mighty uneasy for a long, long time because up until that incident we had assumed that approaching enemy planes would be sighted far from the coast and that the city would have ample warning of impending trouble. The fact that an unidentified bomber could actually get over the heart of Los Angeles before it was discovered gave us a long thoughtful pause! I hated the baleful noise of the air-raid sirens but, like countless others, I would have been glad to hear them on that particular evening.

Shortly after the first of June Dorothy and I began making preparations for Margery's arrival. She had finished her year of teaching at Pella and planned to spend the summer with us in Hollywood. I was very eager to "show off" Juliana and it was my fond hope that I could get some curl into her red hair before Margery arrived. Yes, Juliana was born with red hair and I hoped it would stay that color, but by the time she was three months old it had all disappeared and she had golden hair even straighter than the proverbial string. It's gotten straighter as the years go by, too.

Dorothy and I (plus Juliana in her basket) drove to the Union Station about five o'clock one afternoon to meet Margery, and my! that was a happy reunion. We could scarcely believe that the "three Driftmier girls" were in one spot so far from Shenandoah! After a few days of sight-seeing for Margery's benefit we settled down to wait for Craig-Kristin who was due the last week in June. I felt that Juliana was fortunate to have two cousins so near the same age for about the middle of March her cousin Kristin Solstad had been born in Minneapolis—and now we had the second Kristin to anticipate.

At five o'clock on the morning of June 24th, Frank came downstairs to awaken me with the news that Dorothy was dressing to go to the hospital. It had been planned in advance that Margery would stay and take care of Juliana, and that I would go with Dorothy and Frank, so there was great scurrying around for the next fifteen or twenty minutes. Then, in another twenty minutes or so we were at the Cedars of Lebanon again, only this time the roles were reversed and I went to the waiting room where Dorothy had sat four months earlier. Frank and I had a good long visit that morning! We were just casting around for a new subject of conver-



sation when the news was brought to us that Kristin had arrived—eight pounds, ten ounces. She was brought out for us to see, and then we hurried to the telephone to call Shenandoah and tell the folks that their second granddaughter was safely in the world.

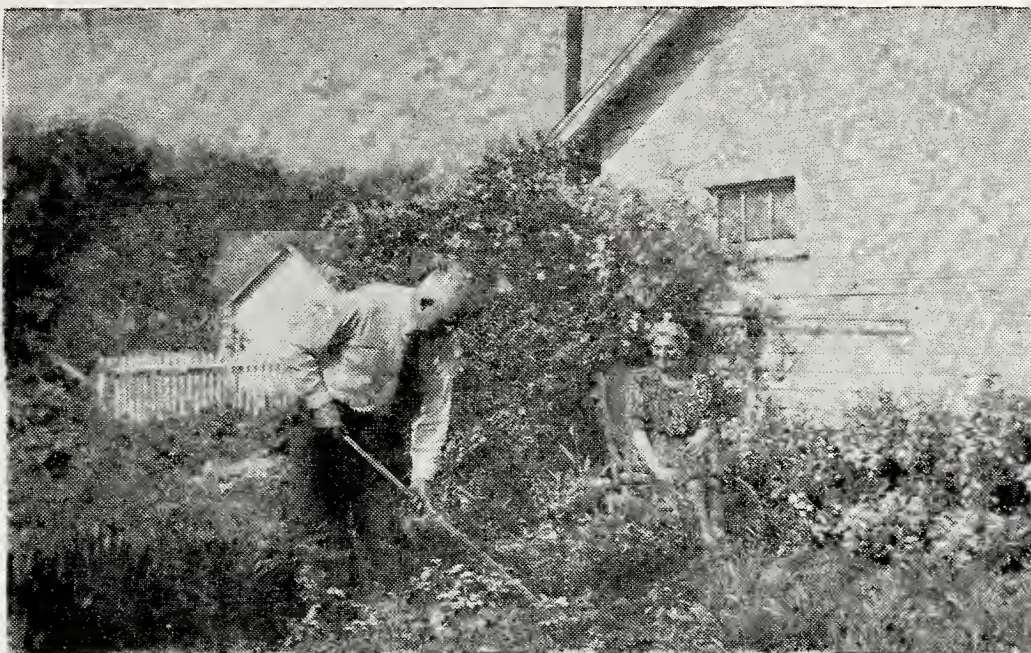
Dorothy returned from the hospital when Kristin was eight days old, and then began a period so chaotic that I have no clear memory of it at all! Both Dorothy and Margery have the same garbled impressions, while Frank and Russell can recall nothing whatsoever of that time, so there is no place to turn for verification of any incidents or events. I daresay that every family has such blank spots scattered here and there.

In our case this particular blank spot was caused by the fact that we had such a dreadful time with Kristin. She was one of these exceedingly unfortunate babies who cannot get started on a comforting routine of nourishing food and restful sleep. Nothing agreed with her. She cried constantly at the hospital and she cried constantly after she returned home. The only time she wasn't crying was when she fell into a fitful sleep from sheer exhaustion. Perhaps someday science will discover a miraculous solution to such cases (probably great strides have been made since the summer of 1943 when we went through this), but all we could do at that time was struggle and hope for the best. If you've ever gone through this you know only too well what I'm talking about.

Around the end of July things looked a little brighter so far as Kristin was concerned, and when we learned that Grandmother Johnson was coming from Lucas to help Dorothy, Margery and I decided to go back to Shenandoah. Margery's plans were more or less following a definite schedule that she had outlined for herself when she arrived in California around the first of June, but my plans were dictated by the fact that we had experienced a really upsetting blow the last week in June. After two years of figuring and planning Russell had gone into business for himself, and he had had only six weeks to taste the first fruits of success when a big fire destroyed his entire set-up. I've never mentioned this before in the pages of the magazine because I couldn't bear to think about it!

Well, we were momentarily at loose ends and I decided to take advantage of the moment for my first visit to Shenandoah in two years. This is how it happened that Margery, Juliana and I told Dorothy a tearful goodbye (I don't know who was the unhappiest about that time!) and once again headed for the Union station. Something very funny happened at the outset of that trip, and I've laughed about it many times since then.

We had a bedroom reservation (an indulgence that I took only because Juliana was such a small baby) and when we were shown to our quarters we were much surprised to find it



Dad and Mother spend a lot of time together in their garden. Directly behind Mother you can see the west wall of our former Kitchen-Klatter offices.

loaded with all kinds of expensive luggage, including a full-rigged golf outfit. The porter disappeared before we could call his attention to this fact, so Margery and I proceeded to unload our big collection of cheap luggage, including Juliana's basket. We were just getting Juliana settled in the basket when the owner of the expensive luggage turned up, and to say that he was utterly amazed at finding us there is stating it very mildly. We compared tickets and found that we had identical reservations. I didn't offer to move! I figured that one lone man could find something else on the train more easily than two women and a baby, so I just sat. Margery also sat. He sat too. For a while it looked as though we'd all cross the country together, but later in the day he turned up something in the line of a berth and disappeared — we didn't see him again.

At the time we were traveling East to Shenandoah, Wayne was traveling West to Australia. He had been made a staff sergeant while he was still stationed in Hawaii, so this fresh move was made with a slightly exalted rank. Donald was then at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois, and of the three boys he was the only one I had genuine hopes of seeing during my visit with the folks. Howard was still up in Oregon having a bad time of it, and Frederick was in New York.

It was a great disappointment to me to realize that I had missed Frederick by only one short month. I hadn't seen him since he had left for Egypt several years earlier and felt chagrined to think our paths had missed crossing by so short a time. His health had improved greatly during the six months he spent in Shenandoah, and thanks to a combination of a new drug and a rigid diet he had recovered sufficiently to start out again. All through that half-year at home he had gone many places to make speeches on the subject of prisoner of war camps, and

he had also done some radio work that brought him in touch with many people. However, all of this didn't satisfy his longing to be back in the thick of things, and he spent endless time trying to get into Red Cross work. This came to nothing because only appointments in tropical countries were available, and with his illness he could not consider returning to the tropics. All in all, the best course of action seemed to be to prepare himself for the Ministry and then enter the service as an army or navy chaplain.

This he did. In June, 1943 he entered the Union Theological Seminary in New York (a division of Columbia University) and settled down to a gruelling routine of academic work. It's my guess that he first found classroom work just a little difficult after his stimulating years in Egypt—and particularly the last year when he worked in the front lines of the British army!

Mother and Dad were waiting at the Union station in Omaha when we arrived late at night, and it was a thrilling moment when I showed them Juliana.

It was a lot of fun to be at home for the first time with a baby, and I must say that Juliana seemed to pick up the thread of my thought and conduct herself accordingly. She had a very sweet smile that she turned on for my oldest friends who sort of marveled at the fact that I had a baby, and all in all she made me feel very proud. After the struggle with Kristin I was doubly grateful for the fact that I hadn't experienced any tortured feeding problems or allergies—I seemed to have a version of Topsy who just grew, although looking back on it I wonder why she did when I fussed so nervously!

Around the first of September Margery returned to Pella to take up her second year of teaching there, and at about the same time Dorothy arrived from Hollywood with Kristin. This was a real reunion, and how we did laugh when we put both



babies down on the bed and let them get acquainted with each other! Kristin was sadly underweight because of her unending feeding problems, but she was the wiriest baby I've ever seen and simply mauled Juliana without mercy.

It was about the third week of September that Donald came home from Rantoul on a short furlough. He was on his way to the headquarters of the 2nd Air Force at Colorado Springs, for he had graduated from the Air Force Weather Forecaster's school at Chanute Field. One detail of Donald's short visit will always be vivid to me because he accompanied me to Council Bluffs one night when I was enroute to Minneapolis to show Juliana to her father's parents.

My train was almost three hours late that night, and Donald and I walked back and forth on the platform visiting for long spells. He had Juliana in his arms, and whenever trains loaded with troops passed by all of the men leaned out and whistled, broke into mock sobs and sang "Mammy!" I'm positive that they thought it was a sad war-time parting—Donald and I felt foolish, to say the least.

When I returned from the visit in Minneapolis I wanted to get back to Hollywood at once, but train reservations weren't turned up over night at that time so I had to wait until Thanksgiving Day. Dorothy wanted to return also, and was just on the verge of making reservations when Kristin developed a particularly violent siege of feeding difficulties and couldn't be taken on a trip. It was during the month that I waited for Thanksgiving Day to turn up that Dorothy and I began our first sewing for Juliana and Kristin. We fixed up the southwest room (always known as Howard's) for wholesale sewing projects and accomplished a great deal. Margery was teaching in Pella, but she came home for a couple of weekends before Thanksgiving and did some sewing with us.

The Sunday before I returned to California we had both babies christened, and later in the afternoon we had a family gathering and took some pictures. And by the way, this is the time to answer a question that many of you have asked through the years—what middle names do our children have? Well, they were christened that day in November with the names of Juliana Verness and Kristin Johnson. We said, when their names were chosen, that if they ever wanted middle names they could select their own. Dorothy had done this and was well pleased with the arrangement! She was christened Dorothy Driftmier, but when she was about ten she decided that she liked the name Louise, so that became her middle name. Our girls can do likewise.

My big train headed west out of Omaha at eight o'clock on Thanksgiving morning, and as I saw the banks of dirty snow outside I felt fortunate to be turning towards sunshine and flowers once again. Rus-



Juliana was nine months old here. This was taken on the day we returned to our home in Hollywood from a long visit in Shenandoah.

sell was waiting at the Union Station in Los Angeles when we pulled in there around ten in the morning, and he was almost overcome when he saw Juliana! He had carried her on to the train in her basket when we left Los Angeles, and now he saw a genuine little girl sitting bolt upright on the train seat, her blue velvet bonnet perched most becomingly on her head, and her blue velvet coat making her look almost two years old. This outfit was made by Grandmother Verness, so I can feel free to say that it was of surpassing elegance!

Of course it was good to be back in my own home again, to pick up the familiar threads of the familiar routine. Frank too marveled at the way Juliana had grown and spent much time playing with her. We were all hopeful that Dorothy could get Kristin straightened out in time to arrive in Hollywood for Christmas, but letters from her carried more and more discouraging news and by the 10th of December we realized that she'd never make it, so Frank got plane reservations to fly back and have Christmas with them in Shenandoah.

In some respects that was a lonely spell for me. Russell had gone into an interesting job connected with defense—he made x-ray photographs of vital parts used in the manufacture of planes, but it was night work and I was alone from dusk to dawn. Frank was also on the night shift at Lockheed, so Juliana and I kept each other company through those long hours.

The day before Christmas Frank left for Iowa, so Russell, Juliana and I were alone during the holiday. Howard was still up in Oregon and still hopeful that he would be transferred to Southern California. Frederick was in New York, Donald was in Colorado Springs, and Wayne spent that Christmas in Rockhampton, Australia. This left only Margery, Dorothy, Kristin and Frank with the folks for Christmas.

When Frank returned he said that Dorothy had reservations for January 1st and thus would soon be back. I began counting the days, and just about the time I'd progressed to planning details of the home-coming dinner, we received a wire that Kristin was seriously ill and that Dorothy couldn't take her reservations.

Poor Kristin! I'm so glad that this is virtually the end of her long misfortunes because I realize that up to the present point all references to her have carried an ominous ring. Well, as if Kristin hadn't had trouble enough, she developed whooping cough and very nearly died. At the conclusion of that harrowing month Dorothy put her on the scales and found that she weighed around twelve pounds—she'd weighed eight pounds, ten ounces at birth and now was around seven months old, so you can see how poorly she had progressed. Once again Dorothy made train reservations, and this time she actually managed to get underway.

When Frank walked into our house carrying Kristin that February morning I tried not to show my shocked surprise. Both she and Dorothy looked as though they'd been through some kind of a terrible famine! They would have made fitting subjects for posters on the subject of foreign relief just as they looked that morning. It seemed to me that the most imperative thing at hand was to get both of them fattened up without a moment's delay.

This happy reunion in Hollywood was clouded by the news that Dorothy brought. She had spent an anguished twenty-four hours back in Iowa trying to decide whether or not she could leave because Dad was lying critically ill in the Shenandoah hospital following an emergency appendectomy. Peritonitis had developed and he was in a most serious condition. Dorothy didn't see how she could leave, but on the other hand she had called and found that if she didn't take her reservations on the following day she would have another six weeks to wait, and when she thought of getting Kristin into the sunshine and out of a bitter winter it seemed that the only thing to do was to get on the train.

Within an hour after Dorothy's arrival we had telephoned Mother and found that Dad had passed the crisis and would recover. This was his first really serious illness, and none of us could visualize him lying in a hospital bed. Unfortunately this all happened at a time when it was virtually impossible to get special nursing care, and although he had a special nurse for the first forty-eight hours, it was almost catastrophic when she developed a bad case of flu for she could not be replaced. In this emergency an old family friend, Ethel Baker Baldwin, came to the rescue. She took care of Dad, then went to the house and drove Mother out to sit with him, then drove her back, took care of the stoker, and otherwise managed the details that none of us seven children were here to look after.

At the end of three-and-a-half weeks Dad was able to be brought home, and for the first time Mother could begin to feel that things were half-way back to normal.

It seems to me, looking back on it, that the year running from June, 1943 to June of 1944 was fraught with dis-



aster. My account of it, you see, has very little of joy and pleasure lurking around the corners! And somehow all of the trouble and anxiety was climaxed by the report from Dorothy's specialists at the end of March that she would have to be sent to the desert at once for a rest cure. The long months of ceaseless worry and sleepless nights had taken their toll—Kristin was slowly on the upgrade but Dorothy had gone steadily down hill. We couldn't find a living soul to come in and care for Kristin, and with my physical handicap it was out of the question to assume the care of two babies, particularly when one of the babies was on a diet that kept a person busy preparing. So the only possible solution seemed to be for Margery to come. Within twelve hours after she received our wire she was on the train, three days later Dorothy was out on the desert taking a rest cure, and Margery was in charge of Kristin. Yes, it was a dislocated time.

In looking back over our family letters that are dated during the summer of 1944, all of the grim reality of war comes to the surface of memory with appalling clarity. I have just finished reading a big stack of these letters, and suddenly I do not feel that I am really here at my desk in Shenandoah on a winter afternoon but that I am back in California when the war was ever-predominant in our minds.

It seems to me, looking back on it, that we were continually waiting for ominous reports; the sight of a boy in a Western Union uniform or the sound of the telephone in the middle of the night was enough to make our hearts start pounding. We were specifically concerned about Wayne at that particular time. He was in the combat area of New Guinea, and almost every night brought Jap air-raids. Fortunately for our own peace of mind, we did not know the details of those months spent in the jungle until the war was over.

I think that one reason we felt acutely disturbed about Wayne was because he had disappeared with such eerie swiftness! In his case there had been no furloughs, no brief visits, no period of being shifted about from camp to camp. He simply got on the bus and went to Des Moines—and that was the end of it. No member of the family ever saw him again except Dad, who told him goodbye at the dock in San Francisco.

In one of the letters that I just finished reading I found this: "Oh, how I wish that I could be back in Iowa in the spring and all the roses, tulips and lilacs in bloom. Quite a contrast to this place where our thoughts ever turn to death. It is funny, but we never even consider our own possibility of death but always think of the other fellow." This was written from a thatched jungle hut in New Guinea in May, 1944.

In early May of 1944 Howard was at long last transferred from Camp Adair in Oregon to Camp San Luis Obispo about two-hundred miles



Just before Howard left for the Union station this picture was taken in May, 1944. Lucile is holding Juliana, Dorothy was holding Kristin, and Margery is at the right.

north of Los Angeles. At his very first opportunity he secured a week-end leave and came by train to Los Angeles to visit us. Dorothy had returned from the desert only two days earlier, so all three of us girls, plus the two babies, went to the Union Station to get him.

I can't tell you how wonderfully happy we were that weekend—it seemed almost like the good old safe and secure days to sit down to a big Sunday dinner in my dining room (we fixed a platter of fried rabbit that day for we knew that Howard loved it and probably hadn't tasted any for a long, long time) and to have a fine visit. We all felt that we had to get everything said for we knew that Howard had been transferred to go through a training program for beach landings, and that at any time he might be shipped away. I might say also that he was a man too old to indulge in the cock-sure illusions of youth; he wasn't the least bit eager to make those landings under enemy fire—he didn't want to show anyone anything!

Late in the afternoon before we drove Howard back to the station to catch his train we took the picture that appears on this page. It's really not too good of any of us, but we've always enjoyed it because it calls up such warm memories of a happy weekend.

On June 5th Howard left San Luis Obispo for his last furlough in Shenandoah. He had a happy visit there, but for a number of reasons Dorothy and I will never forget his return to California when the furlough was over. It was such a curious experience that I will have to tell you about it.

We received an air-mail letter from Mother telling us that Howard was returning by plane and suggesting that we meet him. Now this sounds simple enough, but in those days planes were running far off-schedule and there was no assurance that you'd ever be able to board the particular flight you'd intended to take. Mother said that she thought Howard would reach the Burbank air-

port at 11:00 P.M., so Dorothy and I decided to make the trip to meet him.

This was during gas rationing, of course, and the last drops of gas were in the tank—we were scared to death that we'd run out on the long drive to Burbank. Yet at the same time we couldn't bear to think of Howard coming in and looking for us in vain and then deciding to go to a hotel, so we decided to run the risk of starting with an almost-empty tank. Margery stayed with Juliana and Kristin, so Dorothy and I started out alone around ten at night.

When we reached the airport we inquired at the desk immediately to see if Sgt. H. H. Driftmier were scheduled on the passenger list. No, not a trace of him was to be found. This discouraged us, needless to say, but we sat down and decided to stick it out. 11:00 P.M. arrived, a big plane came in from Omaha, but no Howard. About every ten minutes a plane came in and one departed, but no sign of Howard. At midnight we inquired again—no, the name Driftmier did not appear on any scheduled flight. Now common sense might tell you that there was only one conclusion to draw—he had NOT left Omaha and would NOT be in, but somehow Dorothy and I just wouldn't give up!

1:00 A.M. came—no Howard. Then about 2:00 A.M. we were suddenly electrified to hear this over the blaring loud-speaker in the waiting room: "Will Sgt. H. H. Driftmier report at once to the Communications Desk?" Dorothy and I looked at each other in blank astonishment. It sounded almost weird to hear the name "Driftmier" called out suddenly in that busy airport terminal, and we couldn't figure out what in the world had happened—we'd gone to the runway every time a plane arrived and we simply could not see how Howard had gotten off without being visible to our eyes. Of course we went to the Communications Desk immediately to inquire and were told that they'd made a mistake—no Sgt. H. H. Driftmier was scheduled!

We were willing then to give up and start home defeated, but then we agreed to wait for just one more plane. Shortly after 2:00 A.M. this one more plane rolled into the airfield from the East, and as Dorothy and I stood at the fence waiting for passengers to come down the ramp we were overjoyed to see Howard's familiar figure—the last person to leave the plane. We were tickled to death to think we had waited for he was ill, and it was a satisfaction to us to have him in our homes instead of off in some hotel. Early the same morning we took him down to catch a bus for San Diego where he was stationed for the last phases of his training program.

About this time word from Mother brought the news that Frederick had completed his work at the Union Theological Seminary and had transferred to Yale University for further courses. Donald was at Peterson



Field in Colorado and still expecting to be sent overseas. I might say right here that all of the family letters over a period of several years contain one classic phrase: "Donald expects to be shipped across soon." I can never remember receiving a letter from Mother in which this phrase didn't appear, and Donald's own letters invariably concluded with it. He was actually out of uniform in January of 1946 before he accepted the fact that he was not to be shipped across.

The day Kristin was a year old, June 24th, 1944, something amusing happened that gives you an idea of how much she had improved after her long siege of difficulties.

It was around one o'clock when the landlady knocked on Dorothy's back door in a poor frame of mind. Would Dorothy and Frank mind putting some strips of felt on Kristin's rocking horse at their very earliest opportunity? She was heartily weary, she said, of hearing that heavy thump-thump-thump so many times during the day.

Well, it wasn't the rocking horse, a little red rocking horse. It was the high chair, a big, heavy maple chair, the sturdiest one Frank could buy. By throwing herself back and forth in it Kristin could move it the length of the kitchen and then bang against the wall! They tried everything on the bottom of those four high chair legs and nothing could prevent Kristin from doing this. The only thing that would hold it stationary was to tie two legs to the stove and two legs to a built-in breakfast table. That gives you an idea of the child's power!

We had a nice birthday party for her, but it was a hectic time because the most precious gift, a musical chair (it was pink enamel with a Swiss music box in it that began to play when a child sat down) was a constant source of contention between the two babies. Juliana howled and kicked if Kristin sat down, and Kristin shrieked and kicked if Juliana sat down. Eventually the chair caused so much trouble that it had to be put away. As of this date in 1949 it is still in excellent condition and the girls do NOT fight over it!

However, just before the chair was put away something happened that will amuse all of you who read my account of Juliana's motionless babyhood and my nervous conviction that something was terribly wrong with her. One morning Dorothy and I were very busy in Dorothy's kitchen and after listening to enough squabbling over the musical chair Dorothy picked up a straight dining room chair and put it on top of the dining room table. On top of this chair she placed the musical chair. We had the door closed between the kitchen and dining room, and suddenly we were shocked to hear the familiar strains of the musical chair. We dashed in and found Juliana sitting in it at that great height. She was fifteen months old and I decided then and there that nothing much could be wrong with a baby who could scale such heights successfully.



Donald and Dad when Donald was home on a furlough in 1944.

Shortly after Howard had been transferred to San Diego for the final stages of his training program, Margery started to work in the production-management offices at Lockheed. The day she applied for this job she came home to tell us that the man who interviewed her was a former college professor under whom she had taken a number of classes. In that vast plant she hadn't dreamed that she would run into anyone whom she knew. Her job was interesting but tiring for she spent the entire day going from office to office with various reports, and if any of you can remember the amount of ground Lockheed covered you can also visualize how much walking she had to do. By the time she arrived home at night she was ready to drop in her tracks.

About mid-summer Howard turned up unexpectedly at our apartment on a Sunday night. He had only a few hours with us and when we went to take him to catch his bus we said goodbye knowing that he wouldn't be back. He didn't know, of course, when he would be shipped out but he knew full well that it wouldn't be long and that he wouldn't have another leave. He was right. Dorothy and I were not to see him again until the exciting night we located him at Camp Stoneman in 1945 only an hour after he had returned. (This is such an unusual incident that I will tell you about it in detail in a later chapter.)

One summer afternoon Dorothy and I went out to do some shopping and as usual I left my apartment locked but Dorothy left hers unlocked — I once had prowlers when my apartment was left unlocked — Dorothy never locked a door and never had prowlers! We returned from the store about four o'clock, and when we stopped in front of the house I looked up

and saw a man sitting in the window of Dorothy's apartment. I looked again, and then saw someone waving — a moment later we heard footsteps hurrying down the stairs, and then we saw Donald! We thought that he was at Peterson Field in Colorado and certainly he was the last person whom we expected to see.

It seems that he had an opportunity to get on a bomber at Peterson Field that morning and fly out to the Coast. It was an excellent chance to visit us, so he took off shortly after 9:00 A.M., arrived at March Field near Riverside at 1:30 and then hitched several rides into Hollywood. He hadn't seen Margery for almost three years, and when she walked in from work that night and saw him sitting at the dining room table she could scarcely believe her eyes. He was only able to spend that one night with us, and then had to leave early in the morning to catch a bomber back to Peterson Field. I think that it was the most unexpected visit we had during the years we lived in California.

That summer Frederick spent at New Haven, Conn., where he was studying at Yale University. He was student counsellor for some twenty-odd boys and was too busy to write to anyone but Mother and Dad. And I might point out here that by this time we were all so widely scattered that it kept Mother busy getting off letters to us. She and Dad were completely alone during these years but they were both so busy that they said they had no time to get lonesome.

In August some changes came to our way of life in Hollywood. After two-and-a-half years of living in the same apartment house on Norton Avenue, Dorothy and I had to say goodbye to each other. Russell had gone into the photography division of Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego and after a fruitless search for housing there, I decided to move to San Francisco where Russell would join me in October when he was transferred into another photographic unit. As I write this I can relive again all of the atmosphere of those years when half of the country seemed on the move, and people went from Phoenix, Arizona to Mobile, Alabama to Baltimore, Maryland and back to Seattle, Washington as casually as they now go a hundred-odd miles.

It was a big job to get the apartment cleared out and everything ready to move. I've never forgotten the day the big van called for our things—I know that at least fifty times during the two hours it stood in front I went to the door to say that the apartment was already rented. From the time the first curtains and drapes came down I was kept busy saying this over and over, and I'm sure that it's no exaggeration to say that a good five-hundred times I made that explanation during the month between the day I started packing, and our actual departure.

Dorothy drove Juliana and me to the station on a late August afternoon, and thus ended the Hollywood



chapter of our lives that had covered all kinds of weird night shifts, the arrival of our children, greetings and farewells to countless friends and relatives after the war started, and a thousand other things too.

In San Francisco the war seemed much closer. I did miss the sound of planes above us almost every hour of the day and night, but of course there hadn't been the sight of camouflaged ships passing out through Golden Gate.

At about the time we were getting well settled in San Francisco, Wayne was leaving Brisbane, Australia for New Guinea. This was his second siege in New Guinea for he had first been there (at Hollandia) from April to June in the preceding year. At that time he had the status of a Technical Sergeant, but this time when he returned to New Guinea it was as a 2nd Lieutenant, a rank he had acquired by putting in a number of months at OCS in Brisbane.

Wayne's work in the Finance Division of the Army may not sound overly hazardous, on the face of it, but the possible atmosphere of security that might have been expected by anyone looking at it from the viewpoint of the civilian world, was dissipated quickly enough when the details of his work were known. It fell to his lot to take the payroll to groups of men stationed in all sorts of places. These trips were always made by plane, and the bulk of the time every inch of the flight took place in areas where the Japs could be expected at any second. When these long trips were made all of the money (it ran into many thousands of dollars) and important papers were carried in pouches equipped with devices that would destroy them automatically should the plane be attacked and come out the loser. The personnel had to travel unequipped with such devices, and more than once when it seemed that a mission would never be accomplished they would gladly have traded places with their money and papers. Naturally we knew none of these things until the war was over.

Among the things we heard long after they had happened was an experience of Howard's that took place in the autumn of 1944. He was then stationed at a point in the Philippines where life was lived on a strictly minute-to-minute basis. For almost forty-eight hours he had been marooned in a fox-hole where the water was right up to his neck. Every time he felt like dozing off from sheer exhaustion his head slipped into the water and this awakened him in a hurry. On top of this he had discovered early in his siege that every time he attempted to straighten up slightly to shift his position a Jap sniper in a nearby tree took a shot at him. They were appallingly accurate shots too, the kind that discouraged any further stretching for a long, long time.

After about forty-eight hours of this Howard came to the conclusion that he couldn't be much worse off, no matter how you want to look at it, so he stood straight up in the foxhole and used his own gun. He must have



Kristin was at last on the upgrade when this picture with her mother was taken in August, 1944.

caught the sniper while he was doing his own bit of stretching for there were no more shots from that particular tree. Our family has always been right there in the foxhole with Howard when he tells this story for we know him well enough to imagine very clearly exactly the frame of mind he was in when he stood up in the water and shot. We have also had an inkling as to his frame of mind when he left guard duty in that area on a pitch black night and crawled into his foxhole only to find himself in the company of what he thought was a cobra (there were many in that vicinity). Using a match or flashlight was utterly out of the question, so all he could do was wait until he felt the comparatively reassuring presence of a rat.

After such details, which are far from the grimmest, it seems almost flippancy to go back to mentioning quiet domestic details, but we had to keep going along in our own small grooves and facts are facts.

In October Margery had a brief vacation and came up to visit us in San Francisco. She had intended to spend only a weekend, but while she was at our home she met the head of a private school who was extremely eager to find an experienced primary teacher. Teaching was Margery's profession, of course, and so she agreed to step in and fill the shoes of a woman who had been forced to resign because of poor health. However, she first returned to Hollywood and spent a few days "breaking in" the girl who was to take her place in the office at Lockheed. Then she came back to San Francisco and started teaching. I might say too that for a person who had taught in a good, sound public school in Iowa it was a revelation to

teach in a private school where the tuition was so high it automatically limited the students to those from homes where money was never a problem. There's an old phrase that goes "Poor Little Rich Girl" and Margery saw it in real life. She was in a state of perpetual astonishment over her experiences in that school!

After Margery had departed from Hollywood Dorothy wrote and asked me to "look around" for housing—if I could find anything she and Frank would move up with Kristin. Now this letter came at a time when I would have said that my chances for lifting up an end of the Golden Gate Bridge would be substantially better than my chances for finding an apartment or a house. It's true that Russell, Juliana and I had a house, an honest-to-goodness house with a fenced-in backyard, a comparative rarity in San Francisco where the bulk of the citizens live in apartments of one kind or another. But we'd gotten our house only because a dear friend made it possible (through a series of twists and moves that it would take twenty pages to narrate!) and I didn't see how such a trick would ever again be turned.

But at the thought of having Dorothy, Frank and Kristin in the same city I couldn't just lie down and pronounce the situation hopeless, so I started on a search for housing. Furthermore, I found it—and in very short order. At a time when families were sleeping in theaters for lack of a roof I turned up a six-room house FURNISHED, and to hold it Margery moved in and lived there alone until Dorothy and Frank could arrive.

We've always said that it was one place Mother could never, never have gotten into under any conditions. This house was built on a "step street" meaning that it was too steep for cars—there was no access to it except by a series of about two-hundred steps up from the bottom of the hill, and about the same number of steps down from the top of the hill.

One entered the front door right at ground level. The bay windows in the living room were covered with beautiful climbing roses and it was all very run-of-the-mill. BUT, from the living room one walked into the dining room, and there the windows were a good forty feet from the ground! Kristin and Juliana were right in the climbing stage and consequently every window in that house (aside from the living room) had heavy wooden bars nailed across the lower section.

I wish you might have seen the view from Dorothy's upstairs bedroom into the cities across the Bay. It was simply spectacular—that's the only word for it. We had some mighty happy times in that old house, and when Dorothy reads this it will call up a thousand-and-one memories to her.

And by the way, before I leave the subject of that house I must tell you that I unearthed it through a woman whom I came to know quite well, Jack London's daughter. She had lived there off and on and she had a good many of her father's things in it—curious tables (I imagine he picked



them up on some of his Pacific cruises) and books and goodness knows what all. We had all read Irving Stone's biography of Jack London, "Sailor on Horseback" and it interested us to see some of his things.

Easter of 1945 was a happy day for all of us. Kristin and Juliana had a wonderful time opening a box from Grandmother Driftmier, and then after a nice ham breakfast we drove to Golden Gate Park and spent an hour before it was time to go to church. All of the Japanese cherry trees were in bloom that day, and we all remember it as one of the most beautiful mornings we've ever seen.

Dorothy, Frank, Russell and I have all said at one time or another that we wish we might have had the opportunity to live in San Francisco when there wasn't a great war raging. San Francisco is considered one of the most interesting and beautiful cities in the world, but all of us who lived in it only during war time never really had an opportunity to know it and enjoy it. Southern California became almost as familiar to us as southern Iowa because we lived there before the war and had many opportunities, before gas rationing, to explore the countryside. We knew Northern California only during gas rationing, and as a result it never became very familiar to any of us.

Then too, we were there during the days that food rationing reached its climax. I realize that we never experienced the difficulties known for years by English and European women, but there was a time when it was a full day's job to get enough provisions to manage a balanced diet. There was one three-months span when we couldn't even buy margarine for our bread and there were no jams or jellies on the shelf of any store. We graduated from nothing at all on bread to margarine, and three months after that worked up to 1/4 lb. of butter per week. Cream that would whip was something that we didn't see for two years.

I recall with chagrin that when Christmas of 1945 rolled around the very nice woman who had our little corner store was given a pint of whipping cream as a Christmas gift from the dairy that supplied her products of that kind. It so happened that she didn't care for cream, and consequently Dorothy and I each received one-half pint of cream. I was so thrilled to have whipping cream in the house that I couldn't decide how to utilize it to the best advantage, and while I was turning over all of the possibilities in my mind it turned sour! Dorothy had the same experience, and I often wonder if she remembers it when she is handling jars of thick country cream!

We hoarded the small amount of gas we had for our respective cars to take trips that made a difference. One of these trips was to the far limits of Oakland where we went to call on Edith Hansen's son, Don. He had just been flown over from Hawaii and was hospitalized there. We made up a big batch of fudge, thinking it might possibly tempt him, farmed out the children with willing friends in



The big Easter box from Grandmother Driftmier had just been opened when this was snapped. A moment later Kristin and Juliana were fighting over the candles on the table!

Berkeley, and finally arrived at the hospital only to find that he'd been flown out two hours earlier. That was a genuine disappointment to us for we'd hoped to be able to write at once and give his parents a report—no one else from home had been able to see him and I knew they'd anticipate word from us.

We made another trip to Mare Island to see a Shenandoah boy who was hospitalized there after being critically injured in a plane crash. We had better luck that time and actually accomplished what we set out to do. One very funny thing happened on that Sunday trip that I must tell you about.

Juliana was two at the time and her favorite possession was a little candle snuffer. As we drove along the highway behind a truck we were suddenly astonished to see flames burst out between the pieces of furniture that made up the load. By speeding up, going around the truck and then honking and waving frantically we were able to tell the drivers up in the big cab that their truck was on fire. Instantly they halted, all other traffic halted, and everyone pitched in to help.

Juliana and Kristin watched this wild activity in a sort of stunned silence, but after it was all over Juliana said mournfully, "I told you I should have brought my snuffer along. I could have put that out right away." We laughed about that for days.

In May Frederick graduated from the School of Divinity at Yale University, and my! how much all of us wished that Mother and Dad might have been there to see the graduation ceremonies at a church in New Haven, Conn. But Mother didn't think she could travel by train (later years proved her wrong, fortunately!) and gas rationing wouldn't permit the trip by car, so they couldn't be there to see him graduate.

All during Frederick's time at both Columbia University and Yale he had made constant attempts to get into the army or the Red Cross, but both organizations had only tropical appointments open for him and his health would not permit him to return to the tropics. Immediately following his graduation from Yale he made application to join the Navy as a Chaplain, and after considerable delay he was finally notified that he had passed the necessary physical examinations and would be a Navy man for the duration. As soon as he received this word he packed up and came back to Shenandoah to visit the folks, for of course he did not know where he would be assigned and, as a consequence, when he would be able to see them again.

At about that time word came from both Howard and Wayne that they had had the remarkably good fortune to meet in the Philippines. And at about the same time word reached all of us that Wayne hoped to leave soon for the United States.

One beautiful May evening we squandered a small amount of gas for a short ride out to the Golden Gate Bridge (we lived about three miles from it) and parked on a high point to watch the sunset. As far as we could see the ocean was perfectly blank—not a ship moving anywhere. As I looked out I made the comment that it would be a happy, happy day when Wayne's ship came moving in towards the harbor of San Francisco, although when I said it I didn't really think that he'd be back as soon as he had hoped.

The next evening at eight o'clock there was a knock on our front door. I went to it expecting to see the paper boy, but to my utter astonishment there stood Wayne! I simply couldn't believe it. I actually felt for a moment that I was seeing a ghost. He looked taller than I had remembered, and he had that peculiar yellow cast to his skin that all of the men had after several years of service in the Pacific. And yet it was Wayne!

We called Dorothy immediately and she came over at once with Kristin. Frank was at work so he missed out on the initial excitement. Both Kristin and Juliana were a little shy with this uncle whom they had never seen before, and during his stay Juliana always referred to him as "Mister Wayne." He telephoned the folks that night, and you can imagine his sensations and their sensations—Dorothy and I just had to clear out and busy ourselves in the kitchen for we knew so well what all three of them were thinking and feeling.

Two days later we took him to catch a ferry for some point where he was to be given further orders, but this was one parting that didn't leave us feeling sad for we knew how wildly eager he was to get home. I heard later that he ate mince pie and drank a gallon of milk when he finally reached home—he told Mother that those were the two things he'd thought about the most while he was in the Pacific.

At about the same time Wayne was



raveling to Shenandoah, Donald was being transferred to the Herrington Army Air Base at Herrington, Kansas. He was still expecting to be sent overseas!

Right here I should mention the fact that Wayne and Howard missed each other by only a few hours at Leyte. Wayne had flown in there and started looking at once for Howard since they had arranged to meet. To his intense disappointment he learned that he had just left in a convoy that was headed for Okinawa—the boats were still in sight.

The spring of 1945 was a momentous time. Everyone's spirits soared immeasurably with the arrival of V-E day for it became plain that the end of the war was in sight. However, all such days are a feverish combination of tremendous joy and tragic grief—it sharpened the hope of countless families that their loved ones would be home before too long—and for other countless families it emphasized the fact that for their loved ones no homecoming could be anticipated. San Francisco was a sobered city on V-E day. All eyes had been turned out into the Pacific for so long that European events seemed remote and unreal.

April brought the death of President Roosevelt, and regardless of what one's attitude had been towards his policies, there was no escaping the fact that all people in all places felt a quick, vivid sense of living through an historical event. We saw a great city come to a standstill, something almost unheard of when one considers the complexity of traffic and the chaos that results when the normal pattern is disrupted in any way. It is doubtful if we ever again see anything quite like that in our lifetime.

April also brought the initial meeting of the United Nations, and residents of San Francisco had a wonderful opportunity to "sit in" on history being made. We took Juliana and Kristin to see the magnificent display of flags that were flown in front of the great buildings where the conference was held, and regretted the fact that they were too young to remember what they had seen. Dorothy and I envied Russell his opportunity to see practically all of the distinguished foreign representatives, for he worked at Eastman's Kodak store and sooner or later they all wandered in to buy the two rolls of film allotted to each individual. Even Anthony Eden had to content himself with two rolls!

This reference to the United Nations Conference brings back to my mind an incident that touched us very much.

One Sunday morning just before the Conference was over, Dorothy, Frank, Russell and I took our little girls and drove out to the Redwood forest. We wanted to get pictures of those magnificent trees and we realized that we didn't have too much time left to see a few of the things that were important to us. Both of our families were beginning to make plans to return to Iowa as soon as



Shortly after Wayne returned home from the Pacific he had a furlough that he spent at home. About the same time Frederick returned from Yale. This picture of the two boys with Mother and Dad was taken on a Sunday afternoon.

the war was over, and from the handwriting on the wall it was plain to be seen that there might not be too much time left in California. And thus we made the trip over to the Redwood forest.

After we had spent a couple of hours walking through the forest we decided to stop at a little inn to get coffee (ice cream cones for the youngsters) and rest. While we were there a group of English women came in. They were delegates to the Conference and this was their only opportunity to see the redwood trees before they returned to England.

Kristin and Juliana made up with them immediately and, as parents do when their children talk to strangers, we joined in the conversation eventually. The English women were homesick, and although they said they had enjoyed every moment in California and were awe-stricken at the things they had seen, nevertheless they could scarcely wait for the next two or three days to pass so they could board a plane and fly eastward towards home. They talked with great animation about the things they were particularly eager to see at home, and they showed us with pride the redwood souvenirs they had purchased to take back to relatives and friends. We wished them a happy trip home, and the children waved goodbye over and over again.

Because of that pleasant encounter we were saddened to pick up the paper a few days later and read that their plane was lost at sea. It was the only plane, carrying Conference delegates, that failed to make home port, and when we remembered how wildly eager they had been to get back when we talked with them at the little inn in the forest, we read that item with deep regret.

June was a happy, happy month for Mother and Dad. Both Frederick and Wayne were with them at that time. The boys hadn't been together since they said goodbye in New York long ago when Frederick left for

Egypt. In the intervening years they had each experienced a great deal, and naturally they talked long into the night, night after night. At this time their thoughts were often with Howard for he was on Okinawa, and fairly confident that the next major move would be an invasion of Japan.

On the first of July Frederick received orders to report in Omaha where he was sworn into the navy as a chaplain. He took care of all the business connected with this, returned to Shenandoah for a few days, and then left for Williamsburg, Virginia where he was scheduled to attend a school for chaplains that was held at William and Mary College.

Frederick was so eager to get into the thick of things that it was hard for him to return to a classroom so shortly after he had finished his work at Yale. With his departure in July, the fourth star went on to the service flag that hung in the living room window at home.

Shortly before Frederick went away, Wayne received orders to report to Denver for duty in the department of finance at Fitzsimons General Hospital. Denver was one of his favorite places, and after three years and a half in the Pacific it wasn't an arduous chore to pack up for that destination. The six months he spent in Denver did him a lot of good, and he improved greatly in health.

Dorothy and I had a couple of nice visits from Margery that summer. She was working as a bookkeeper for a huge Wholesale Drug Company in Los Angeles and enjoyed the work very much for it entailed considerable responsibility. Her visits with us could be only over the weekends, but we anticipated them and had a good time catching up on all the news.

Certainly we were a widely scattered family in the summer of 1945. Howard was on Okinawa, Dorothy and I were in San Francisco, Margery was in Los Angeles, Frederick was in Virginia, Wayne was in Denver, and Donald was in Kansas. The only members who remained completely stationary were Mother and Dad. They weren't outside of Shenandoah for the duration of the war, and simply kept themselves so busy that they didn't have time to brood about their scattered flock.

Donald found his work at the Herrington Army Air Base a considerable relief after his forecasting at Pueblo, Colorado. The heavy responsibility of the work at Pueblo was enough to wear nerves thin, for it was up to the forecasters at that base to provide absolutely dependable weather reports for squadrons of bombers. The great menace to planes in any mountainous area is sudden storms, and the forecasters were in a constant sweat as a result. If they ordered a large flight of bombers to return to base and then the storm didn't develop, they were in trouble. And they were in trouble if they took a chance and didn't call them in. No matter which way they moved they were likely to end in difficulties! At least weather conditions weren't so unpredictable in



Herrington, and Donald put a little weight on his six-foot-four-inch frame. This pleased the folks for they reported in letters to us that he had looked like a ghost on his last furlough!

August brought V-J Day, the end of the war, and the opening of a new era. All parts of the world indulged in wild rejoicing on that day, but it was left to San Francisco to celebrate so riotously that a state of emergency had to be declared. Some of the details of things that happened in San Francisco are worth reporting, and I'd like to tell you what took place in that area when Japan surrendered and the war came to an end.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of V-J Day Dorothy and I sat at the radio in the living room of Dorothy's and Frank's home in San Francisco. We were waiting, as the rest of the world was waiting, for the official White House announcement that Japan had surrendered. Almost exactly at four o'clock it came, and then began the single most overwhelming concentration of sheer noise that we have ever heard.

Juliana and Kristin came running to us in terror, so we picked them up and went to stand in the yard underneath the palm tree. It was impossible for us to hear each other's voices even though we stood side by side, and when I tell you what made up that great roar I think you'll understand.

Every train standing in the city at that time blew its whistle without ceasing. Thirty-seven air raid sirens screamed, every church bell in the city rang, several hundred boats in the Bay blew their foghorns and whistles, car horns blasted by the many thousands, squadron after squadron of heavy bombers flew just above tree top level, and the great guns of the Presidio fired round after round. The Presidio guns alone were sufficient to shake the earth, so when you add to their heavy roar all of the other noises you can begin to imagine what a tumult of sound swept over San Francisco.

I am not ashamed to say that I stood under that palm tree holding Juliana and wept. It seemed incomprehensible that the war was really over, that people need no longer live in fear of having a messenger stop at their door with the worst possible news. We had watched with sinking hearts the great concentration of shipping in San Francisco that could mean only one thing—an eventual invasion of Japan—and to realize that this invasion need never be attempted was too good to be true.

It was almost six o'clock before the tremendous roar began to diminish in any way, and then I realized that I had better get to my own home while it was still possible to drive through the streets. Just as we drove up in front we met Russell—the minute the sirens started blowing he had hurried out the back door of the store and caught the last street car that moved on schedule for many,



Kristin and Juliana loved nothing more than a trip to Golden Gate Park, but they were sometimes alarmed by the animals and clutched at each other for comfort. This was the period when they looked like twins.

many hours. San Francisco was a city just as badly dislocated by joy as by a disaster.

We lived approximately five miles from the business district, but at seven o'clock we stepped to the front door and looked out to see something that frightened us for a moment. A solid wall of white was moving rapidly down the street—and it wasn't fog—it was actually paper. Stop and think for a second how much confetti, torn telephone books, etc., it would take to make a wall several feet high that moved over five miles! We said then that it would take months to clean up the city—and it did.

We made no attempt to leave our own doorstep for two days. Reports that came constantly over the radio were enough to frighten anyone into keeping off the streets. Hundreds and hundreds of store windows were smashed, a number of people were killed in the mobs, and every hospital in the city was jammed with emergency cases. What started out as a heart-felt expression of great joy turned into a holocaust, and finally, at midnight on the second night, tanks were brought to clear the streets. They lined up in a solid wall on Market Street, the one big main street where the worst rioting took place, and moved inexorably straight through to the harbor. It was the only possible way of bringing the wild disorders to an end.

It is easy to feel critical about behavior that results in the loss of life and in the loss of property that ran into the millions, but you must remember that V-J Day caught thousands of boys in that city who were headed for an invasion of Japan. They knew that once they sailed through Golden Gate their chances of sailing back through it were on the debit side. When people are snatched from such a predicament it's understandable that their sense of relief would lead to such rioting.

V-J Day found Howard on an LST headed towards Mindoro from Okinawa. The men on that ship heard President Truman's announcement, but there was no excitement or rejoicing. Howard says that they were all so depressed and "beat-up" after the Okinawa campaign that they

couldn't react to anything, and then too, news of such caliber had to be taken gingerly. What if it weren't true? Men who've been under fire for a long time are conditioned to expect the worst, not the best. And no one was going to celebrate until it was proved beyond all conceivable doubt that there was something definite to celebrate.

Eventually, of course, things quieted down and moved in the normal pattern. Yet almost every day brought something out of the ordinary for those of us who lived in San Francisco, and among the things I remember is the morning when one of the wings of the Pacific Air Fleet returned to this country. As far as the eye could see there were planes in the air flying in from the ocean, and the roar that they made shook the ground under our feet exactly as an earthquake does. If you've never seen the entire sky covered with planes you've missed something!

Before long too we began to hear the exciting sound of boat whistles shrieking away in the harbor. Transports began moving in from the Pacific returning soldiers and sailors, and whenever one arrived it was customary to start blowing every whistle in the Harbor area as the ship passed under the Golden Gate Bridge. As many as ten-thousand men came in on a single day, so you can see how often the whistles blew and how much excitement there was.

At the height of this excitement I took Juliana and made a short trip back to see the folks. Mother and I had been working on the sewing book by exchanging letters and papers back and forth, but as the time came to round it all up in its final form we realized that we would have to be side by side to finish it. Obviously it was out of the question for Mother to go to San Francisco, so I went back to Shenandoah. Our train was crowded with soldiers and sailors (all of them happy this time for they were headed homewards) and Juliana made quite a sensation with them because so many men had small children whom they'd never seen, and they were anxious to check up on age, accomplishments, etc. I've never before or since talked to so many strangers about what could be expected of a youngster about two-and-a-half—or a little over.

Mother and I pitched right into our job of winding up "It's Fun To Sew For Little Girls", and when that work was done I went on to Minneapolis so that Grandmother and Grandfather Verness could see Juliana. From there I went to Chicago where I visited a few days with Lucille Sassaman and her family, and then returned to Shenandoah. When I reached Shenandoah I heard that Margery had just been married in Glendale. Dorothy and Kristin flew down from San Francisco to be there for her wedding, although Dorothy just about didn't make the wedding even though she'd made the trip for that purpose, for she turned her ankle as she stepped from the plane



and nearly broke it. She hobbled around her entire stay in Glendale.

This is the place to answer questions that many of you have asked through these past two years. Like many, many other marriages made during the excitement of war times, Margery's marriage proved to be a mistake. And, as many other young women with a small child to look out for have done, she is making her home with the folks in order that Martin may have a secure childhood.

Just before Juliana and I returned to San Francisco from Shenandoah in late November of 1945, Wayne had a brief furlough from Fitzsimons Hospital in Denver and came home. I hadn't seen him since he turned up at our house on his return from the Pacific, and it was a pleasure to find him looking much improved in health. Donald too had a short furlough from his work at Herrington, Kansas, so for a couple of days we made quite a houseful for Mother and Dad.

By this time Donald had been made a Master Sergeant, and since the war was over he at long last was forced to resign himself to the fact that he would not get overseas. I'm sure that men who put in overseas service will always find it hard to understand why any man stationed in the United States would be impatient to get across, but nevertheless many of them felt that way, and Donald was among them.

At this date Frederick was living in Washington, D. C. After completing his special navy assignment at Williamsburg, Virginia, he was sent to Washington to serve as a Chaplain for the Navy Materiel School. However, this title doesn't really encompass all of the duties that he had, for during the week he acted as Educational Officer and counseled men about their future educational work. I believe it was about this time that his letters home began to contain many references to Betty; she too was doing Navy work and for professional reasons they saw quite a bit of each other.

Before I left Shenandoah to return to San Francisco, there was a letter from Howard containing the news that he expected to be returned to the United States in December. Of course he didn't know exactly what boat he would travel on but he stated that possibly it might be the *General Aultman*. I stored this name away in my head for future reference, and after I returned to San Francisco I began studying the long list of boat arrivals that were published daily. One evening about eight o'clock I found the *General Aultman* listed as due to dock the following morning at Pier 15, 8:00 A. M. And then began twenty-four hours of frenzied activity for I was bound and determined to find Howard.

Everything stood against me because the civilian public had been urged repeatedly not to make any attempt to locate men until they actually reached their own home towns.



All of us children were thrilled when Mother sent us this picture that was taken to mark her 20th anniversary as a radio homemaker. What memories those two decades contained for our family! We realize now what a privilege it was to grow up with an invention that has made such a difference to people—and certainly the radio has done that.

No one was permitted at the docks and you can readily see why when you stop to realize that as many as 10,000 men came into the San Francisco harbor every day. All Dorothy and I could hope to do was to take up our stand at some point where we could see the men come down the gang plank and thus determine if Howard had actually made the *General Aultman*.

For a variety of unusual circumstances it was around noon before Dorothy could be located. Then she came over immediately and we started out for Fort Mason to see if any information could be given to us regarding the personnel aboard the *General Aultman*. Fortunately we found a most obliging captain in charge of information, and he simply turned over to us a huge folder containing the names of the men who had come in aboard the *Aultman*. These names were not listed alphabetically or geographically so it was simply a question of going through sheet after sheet. We had looked at countless sheets when our eyes hit IOWA, SHENANDOAH, H. H. DRIFTMIER, and we nearly cried with joy for until that moment we hadn't actually believed that Howard was aboard a boat that had docked a few hours earlier.

Our next problem was to locate him and this was a big one. The same captain told us that in all probability he had been sent up the Sacramento River to Camp Stoneman, and that if we drove up there (about forty miles distant) we could see him IF he could be found. He warned us that our chances were against it for Camp Stoneman was huge, thousands and thousands of men were there, and that in all reality it would be like looking for a needle in the proverbial haystack. From the viewpoint of common sense Dorothy and I should have been properly discouraged, but we weren't. In the face of all obstacles we were determined to find Howard!

Immediately we set out for Camp Stoneman and it was an endless trip because of such extremely heavy traf-

fic that we could move at only a snail's pace every inch of the road. When we finally reached the Camp our hearts sank for we had no idea that it could possibly be so large. It stretched out for miles and miles and it seemed to us that almost every inch of it was covered with barracks. Eventually we found our way to General Headquarters and Dorothy went in to inquire. She returned with disheartening news. The officer in charge told her that so many men had poured in and were still pouring in that he had no up-to-the-minutes lists whatsoever. He said that the only thing to do was to start out and go from barrack to barrack! And he said too that he thought it was useless to start!

Dorothy came back to the car, we talked it over, and then decided to make the attempt. A nice young soldier offered to help Dorothy, so I sat in the car while she started out. I've never forgotten that time because we were parked directly opposite the point where big trucks pulled in to discharge men who had just returned. They came in convoys of twenty or thirty, and my! the wild shouting and back-clapping and whistling that took place when the men jumped from the trucks . . . it was something one could never forget. I kept straining my eyes to see if Howard might appear, but he didn't . . . and then after a couple of hours it was so dark that I couldn't see clearly.

Around 6:30 Dorothy returned to the car in real despair. She had gone to barrack after barrack and waited outside while the soldier with her stepped inside and called out the name Driftmier. No reply. Now she was willing to admit defeat. It was dark, we had a long trip home, and the entire thing seemed hopeless. But somehow we just couldn't give up. The soldier suggested going to just one more barrack, so Dorothy went along, and this last attempt was the one that ended in success. Howard was there.

When he came out and saw us he was almost too overcome for speech. He marveled over and over that we had been able to find him—we arrived at Camp Stoneman at four o'clock and he didn't arrive until five—and the last thing in the world he ever expected to see was his two sisters. Incidentally, I thought it interesting that we were the only civilians searching for anyone. Other people had more sense, I guess.

Well, Dorothy, Howard and I sat in the car and talked and talked. There were a thousand and one things to catch up on and time flew so swiftly that we couldn't begin to cover even the highest of the high points. Of course we wanted to take him in to San Francisco with us, but that was out of the question so we tore ourselves away and started home after what I have always felt was an unbelievable experience. Howard left Camp Stoneman a few days later, went to his separation center at Leavenworth, and arrived home in Shenandoah the day after Christ-



mas. His presents had been left under the tree for him and it was a mighty happy reunion.

That was to be our last Christmas in California and we made the most of it. The four of us had plans for returning to Iowa in the early part of 1946 and the atmosphere of impending change hung over our holiday season.

Right here I should say that during the years we lived in California, Dorothy and Frank, and Russell and I had been with each other almost constantly; good times and bad times were shared mutually — and we even had our only children, Kristin and Juliana, four months apart! Through all of those experiences there was just one big problem in our minds for which we could never find a quick solution. We knew that *eventually* one of us would leave California, and then how would the family left behind manage all alone? I can remember long discussions of this, discussions that always ended with us wishing that we could see into the future so that we might be forearmed, so to speak.

Because of all this I think it genuinely amusing that when the time came to leave we all departed the same day for the same destination—Iowa! Russell, Juliana and I took a train out of San Francisco at 8:00 in the morning. Frank, Dorothy and Kristin drove out in their car just three hours later. So you see, all of our speculations and worries about how one couple of us would manage after the other couple had left, certainly proved to be totally in vain.

But to go back just a little bit . . . around the middle of December Dorothy and I drove down to the railroad station one morning to meet Russell's only sister, Boletta Verness Solstad, and her little Kristin. They had arrived from Minneapolis to spend five days with us on their road to San Diego where at last they would be united as a family—Boletta's husband served with the Marines and didn't miss a thing from Guadalcanal to Okinawa: he didn't see Kristin until she was almost three. Now he was stationed in San Diego, and there may have been happier couples in this world than they were that December, but I don't know where you would have gone to find them.

This was the first meeting of our two Kristins, and they both resented the fact that someone else responded to the same name. Dorothy, Boletta and I had quite a wild time trying to keep things peaceful when our three youngsters, all so near the same age, were together. I'm depending now upon every mother to know exactly what I mean!

After the holidays we settled down in earnest to the big job of packing. Housing was still a terrible problem at that time (no doubt it still is in San Francisco) and we couldn't take a cardboard carton down the front steps and into the garage without someone hurrying to ask us if we were moving, and how about the house? It was the same thing we'd experienced when we left Hollywood, only much worse. Dorothy and Frank were besieged in the same way even



This picture was taken soon after Dorothy and I returned from California to make our future homes in Iowa.

though they lived on a "step street" far removed from a main thoroughfare.

We were due to leave our house on the 10th (the people who followed us had their van outside before we could even clear out!) and it wasn't possible to get train reservations until the 12th, so those last two days we spent with Dorothy and Frank. Now that I look back on it I marvel that the six of us ever moved around that house! It was filled with boxes and barrels, and I will say that at least Juliana and Kristin were constantly entertained by being able to climb over such a conglomeration of stuff. Meals were a mighty makeshift affair during that time! Oh yes—the people who were moving into Dorothy's house were so terrified the deal would fall through that they started hauling in their belongings during those two days; the object was NEVER to allow a property to stand empty for even five minutes. And no one ever did. Dorothy and I were both in a condition approximating coma when we went to bed the last night before departure.

At 5:00 the following morning we were all up and flying around frantically. Russell helped Frank pack his station wagon and that was a back-breaking job since everything that went into it had to be carried down several hundred steps. I had all of our own luggage packed and concentrated those last hours in getting Dorothy's things together. At 7:30 we said goodbye, Frank drove us to the station, and thus ended the San Francisco interlude.

Russell, Juliana and I went first to Glendale where we visited with Margery. She was working for a wholesale drug firm in the heart of Los Angeles.

From Glendale we went to Laguna Beach to visit friends, and then on to San Diego to spend three days with Boletta, John and Kristin. The highlights of that trip were our expeditions to the Balboa Zoo and to a wonderful beach new LaJolla. Then they drove us back to Los Angeles where we met Margery for a farewell dinner, and at 10:00 we boarded the train for Iowa.

We arrived in Shenandoah on a Sunday afternoon, and on Monday we greeted Frank, Dorothy and Kristin. They'd had a wonderful trip and were as happy as we were to be back home again.

Mother's and Dad's house was certainly a busy place during the next few days. Howard was there, completely severed from the army at long last, and Donald was home for a brief visit. Both boys were having a hard time trying to get some civilian clothes on their backs; they couldn't wear the clothes they had left at home when they entered the army, and if you'll think back a little bit you'll recall what a job it was to try and buy clothing during the early part of 1946.

A very short time after this visit Donald was home with his army discharge following almost four years of service. During these years he was stationed in Waco, Texas; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Chanute Field, Illinois; Camp Peterson, Colorado; Pueblo, Colorado; Herrington, Kan-



sas; and El Paso, Texas. With the army behind him he began concentrating on enrolling in some college, and finally decided upon Iowa State College at Ames. He did not enter as a student at Ames until September, so he took a local job through the intervening months.

Wayne was already back at the State University in Iowa City by the time that all of us returned from San Francisco. He specialized in business administration, and certainly the classes in accounting held no great problems for him after his four years in the army finance department. Visits from Wayne were few and far between after he entered the University. He wanted to go straight through as fast as possible since there had been such a long interruption in his college work.

After a few days in Shenandoah Dorothy, Frank and Kristin went to the home of Frank's parents on a farm near Lucas, Iowa. Frank was born and reared on that farm, and he had always said that when his father was no longer able to take care of the work he would go back. That time came in 1946, so that is the explanation for the fact that they returned from California. As soon as the weather permitted Dorothy got to work fixing up the house they were to occupy, and during those weeks Grandmother Johnson took care of Kristin while Dorothy papered and painted. It is only a ten minute walk to Dorothy's house from the homeplace, so they were all together for meals during that period.

Late spring of 1946 found our family still somewhat scattered. Howard and Donald were the only ones living with the folks during this period, and Donald was preparing to leave for Ames where he expected to enter the School of Engineering at Iowa State College. Frederick was in Washington, Wayne was in Iowa City, Margery was in Los Angeles, Dorothy, Frank and Kristin were finally settled on their farm, and Russell, Juliana and I were settled in our home.

It sounds rather peaceful to say in such a quiet fashion that we were settled, but when I think of the work that went into accomplishing this I don't feel very peaceful! Fortunately for both Dorothy and me it was an open, warm spring and we could get a lot of painting and fixing-up done without having to stop and stoke fires. All through March and April we spent many hours grubbing away, and as things turned out it was just as well that our furniture and household goods were six weeks later in arriving than had been promised by the Van and Storage Company, for we finished all of our work just the day before everything turned up.

Both Dorothy and I have never forgotten our sense of relief in having our youngsters where they could play outside in the sun without being watched every second. Neither of us had ever been able to turn our backs for a split second during our time in Hollywood and San Francisco, and it seemed like a minor version of Paradise to have big yards where they could roam and explore.



We've always liked this picture of Betty and Frederick that Russell took when they visited us a short time after their marriage.

We had just gotten into our house and adjusted ourselves to a new routine when all three of us developed terrific colds that eventually turned into the flu. Russell was not in bed long, but Juliana and I had a drawn-out siege that ended with my being hospitalized for pneumonia. No sooner was this over and I'd gotten back home when it became necessary for me to go to the hospital again—and this time Juliana followed me. It was one of those ill-fated times that seem to overtake every family sooner or later, but when we're in the grip of such misfortune it's hard to believe that no one is immune to comparable difficulties.

At last we were all home again, shaky but up on our feet, and life began to seem normal once more. As I write this I am remembering the hundreds and hundreds of thoughtful notes and cards that arrived during that spell — I'll never forget those heart-warming expressions of sympathy. They helped to make a discouraging time much, much easier.

June brought a big event to our family—Frederick's marriage to Betty. We three girls had often wondered if we were destined to have four bachelor brothers, so naturally we were much interested when word arrived from Frederick that his marriage would take place on June 11th. It has just occurred to me that one way to fill in details of past history for our new readers is to reprint the item that appeared in our local Shenandoah paper, so here it is:

"Mr. and Mrs. Julian T. Crandall of Ashaway, Rhode Island, announce the engagement and approaching marriage of their daughter, Elizabeth Jane, to Chaplain Frederick Field Driftmier of the United States Naval Reserve. Chaplain Driftmier is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Henry Driftmier of Shenandoah, Iowa.

"Miss Crandell is a graduate of Al-

fred University, and has her Master of Arts in the field of history from Leland Stanford University. She taught for several years in Friendship, New York before entering the Navy.

"While stationed in Washington, D. C., Miss Crandell served with the Navy Housing Board and later worked as barracks officer and Women's Reserve Representative at the Naval Research Laboratory.

"Chaplain Driftmier is a graduate of the Yale University Divinity School. Before entering the Navy he was a staff member of the American College in Assiut, Egypt. During the early part of the war he served with the British Eighth Army in Egypt and East Africa as a YMCA Secretary. He is now the chaplain of the Radio Materiel School in Washington, D. C.

"The marriage ceremony will be performed June 11 at the chapel where the groom serves. It will be followed by a reception at the Carlton Hotel in Washington.

"Mr. and Mrs. Driftmier will be unable to attend the wedding but Wayne Driftmier, student at the University of Iowa, will fly east to represent the bridegroom's family at the ceremony."

It gives me a peculiar sensation to look at those words about Mr. and Mrs. Driftmier being unable to attend the wedding, for it calls back the years when Mother didn't travel and when a trip to Washington seemed like a dream that could never be realized. We were all convinced that a trip to Spirit Lake, Iowa was the extent of her strength for traveling. If anyone had told us then that before much more time had passed she would be visiting Frederick and Betty in Honolulu — well, we would have dismissed that idea in a hurry.

And so it was Wayne who attended Frederick's wedding and we all envied him! Frederick met his plane at the airport and took him to the hotel to meet Betty's family and close friends, but there was precious little time for visiting because he was due back at the University as soon as possible. A later development hastened his return, and I'll tell you about that in a moment.

Betty's and Frederick's marriage service was read at 7:30 in the evening, and from the photographs taken that evening we have a very complete "view" of everything that happened from the time Betty stepped out of the car in front of the chapel, to the moment when she and Frederick entered the car together to drive to the hotel. Immediately following the reception they left for a mountain hotel in New Hampshire and spent ten days there. Then they returned to their apartment in Washington and waited for Frederick's orders. They hadn't the faintest notion where they would be sent.

There were other wedding plans afoot in our family at that time for Wayne was engaged to Abigail Morrison of Onawa, Iowa. Their plans called for an August wedding at the Morrison family home in Onawa, and when Abigail graduated from the University of Iowa in early June she planned to return to Onawa and spend the summer with her father. She told



Wayne goodbye as he left for Washington and then started to drive back to Onawa with her father. Less than twenty-four hours later Wayne was greatly shocked to have a wire from her delivered to his hotel in Washington telling him that Mr. Morrison had just passed away. He succumbed to a heart attack only a short time after he and Abigail reached their home in Onawa.

Abigail's father's death left her very much alone. Her mother had died a number of years earlier, and her two brothers were not at home. Wayne wanted to be with her, of course, so the moment the reception was over he went to the airport for the return flight.

Mid-July brought us a week's visit with Frederick and Betty. Frederick had received his naval orders to proceed to Bermuda, so he brought Betty back to meet us before he took up his new post. All of us felt as though we had known Betty forever, and her thoughtfulness in a hundred different ways endeared her to the entire family, lock, stock and barrel! I've never forgotten, for instance, that while she was here Juliana had to be kept practically immobile because we suspected rheumatic fever (what a blessing that it turned out not to be), and I can still see her sitting patiently on a scalding July afternoon reading "get-well" cards and playing dolls! I was so exhausted from the effort it takes to keep a three-year old off her feet that it seemed to me Betty had shimmering wings! And I'm not so sure that she doesn't.

\* \* \* \* \*

There are no two ways about it—the summer of 1946 was full of much activity for our family. In fact, we've never had a summer since that contained such a variety of happenings. It's a mistake to say that I doubt if we ever have another summer comparable to it for one never knows what is ahead, but taking everything into consideration it is highly unlikely that we will ever again see a summer in our family when two weddings are the highlights.

Frederick and Betty spent a week with us in July, as I mentioned earlier, and then returned to Washington where they packed up their belongings, made arrangements to store other things, and then went to Ashaway, Rhode Island, to visit Betty's parents. After a short stop Frederick took a plane to his post in Bermuda and started the arduous process of finding a house. As soon as this was accomplished (and it didn't take very long) Betty flew to Bermuda to join him.

Back here in Shenandoah we saw Mother and Dad off for a week's vacation at Spirit Lake, Iowa. Before the war they went there every summer, and on one afternoon during that week they met crowds of their friends at a Kitchen-Klatter picnic. This picnic was almost a summer tradition for a good many people, and everyone missed it when gas rationing prohibited travel of any kind. But in the summer of 1946 people were again going any place they pleased, so the folks made the trip up to Spirit Lake.



At the bottom of the first paragraph on the next page you will find an explanation of this photograph that was taken a few minutes after Wayne and Abigail were married. Just a suggestion of the decorations are shown here for most of them had to be moved aside in order that such a crowd could be photographed.

Dorothy and Kristin came down during that time, and Dorothy and I took the radio program together.

Towards the end of July we received a wire from Margery one morning with the news that she was leaving California and would arrive shortly for a visit. The folks hadn't seen her since she went to Hollywood in February of 1944 to care for Kristin during Dorothy's illness. A lot of water had passed under the proverbial bridge since then, and they were very happy to hear that she was returning. I'll never forget how excited Juliana was when Margery came running into our house to greet us. Both Juliana and Kristin always have adored their Aunt Marge, and they missed her sorely when they couldn't see her.

Shortly after Margery's return we swung into preparations for Abigail's marriage to Wayne. It had been intended originally to have the wedding in Onawa, but after Abigail's father's death it seemed more reasonable to have the wedding here in Shenandoah at our family home.

One thing about our preparations I will never forget, and if you've ever had a comparable experience you'll know what I'm talking about. For at least two years Mother had been eager to have the kitchen repapered and repainted, but during the war years it was virtually impossible to get such work done. All of the young men were in the service, and the older men simply couldn't get to everything—there weren't enough days in a year to cover the endless requests for their labor. Mother had been hoping against hope that the redecorating could be done before hot weather that summer, but as things turned out the paper-hangers and painters arrived

just about three days before the wedding. I recall vividly dodging ladders and scaffolds as we went through the kitchen and back hall on endless errands. It looked for a while as though the women in charge of the reception refreshments would have to dodge those ladders, but the workmen stayed late at night to finish so that this could be avoided.

It has occurred to me that perhaps those of you who are having summer weddings this year might glean a few ideas from an account of Abigail's wedding, so once again I will pick up a clipping from our local paper to supply details. Incidentally, Aunt Helen Fischer was in charge of the decorations and she did a beautiful job. It's a shame that all young brides and grooms cannot have an Aunt Helen to take over at such times!

"At four o'clock on Friday afternoon, August 9, Miss Abigail Florence Morrison, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lawrence Morrison of Onawa, Iowa, became the bride of Stephen Wayne Driftmier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Henry Driftmier of Shenandoah.

"The library of the Driftmier home was the setting for the ceremony. Sprays of white sweet peas covered the south and west windows of the room and were used in bowls throughout the house. Crystal candleabra with ivory tapers and white regal lilies were used at the altar, and large baskets of gold and white gladioli flanked the archways.

"Preceding the ceremony "Because" was sung by Mrs. Margery Harms accompanied by Mrs. Russell Verness. Immediately following this the Lohengrin Wedding March was played and the bride entered the room with



her brother, Henry Clark Morrison of Nevada, Iowa, who gave her in marriage. She wore a white gabardine suit with a cluster of white rosebuds in her hair. The groom was accompanied by his brother, Donald Paul Driftmier of Ames who served as best man. Miss Margaret Shuttleworth of New York City, a sorority sister of the bride at Iowa City, was the maid of honor. She wore a suit of gold gabardine with a cluster of gold roses in her hair.

"Vicar Henry F. Robbins read the Episcopal service for the double ring ceremony, and at its conclusion the bridal couple knelt on a white satin cushion for the beautiful closing prayer.

"After the ceremony a reception was held for members of the family and intimate friends who witnessed the service. An exquisite lace tablecloth was used as a background for the three tiered cake that was decorated with yellow tea roses and a miniature bride and groom who stood under an archway of white sweet peas. Crystal candle sticks with ivory tapers and bowls of tea-roses were used on the table, while gold tapers and vases of gold and white gladioli decorated the room.

"Immediately following the reception Mr. and Mrs. Driftmier left for Wisconsin where they will spend five weeks at the summer home of the bride's uncle near Sturgeon Bay. After a short visit at the Driftmier home in Shenandoah in late September they will return to Iowa City where both of them will resume their work at the University, for the coming year. At the end of that time they will return to Shenandoah to make their home where the groom will be associated in business with his father."

This account doesn't tell you, of course, that at four o'clock on August the ninth there was the most beautiful blue sky that I can ever recall. The entire world bestowed a benediction upon all people that afternoon. If one could draw up to order a perfect hour for a wedding it was that particular afternoon.

It doesn't tell you too that some of the guests who were traveling from Omaha had car difficulties and didn't arrive until after Abigail and Wayne had left the house. Or that Donald's six-feet, four-inches trembled so violently during the ceremony that we feared for him! Or that everyone gathered in the backyard of the folks' home and threw showers of rice as the bride and groom made a dash for their car. We have a picture that Russell took at the moment this happened and it looks as though Abigail and Wayne were running through snow.

The picture on the preceding page was taken just a few minutes after the ceremony was read. Mother is in front and Dad is standing at her left. Margery is directly behind Mother and next to her is Dorothy. Wayne and Abigail are together and between them you can see Donald. Howard is standing directly behind me, and one reason we've never used this picture



Margery and Martin on an early spring afternoon in 1948.

is because of the exceedingly peculiar expression of my mouth! I had just started to tell Juliana to stand still when the camera clicked, and it caught me looking much more fierce than I really am. But it's a very good picture of everyone else, all things taken into consideration, so I've decided to use it.

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In most families there is a feeling of let-down after a wedding, (particularly if the marriage ceremony has been performed at home) and our family was no exception. With Abigail's and Wayne's departure we settled back to take what Mother has always called a "good deep breathing spell" before the usual daily routines settled into focus again. And that didn't take long, of course, for when there is a big family the pattern is constantly shifting.

In early fall Donald came for a brief visit before he embarked on his next round of courses in the College of Engineering at Ames. At about the same time Wayne and Abigail returned from Wisconsin and spent a few days here before they returned to their respective classes at the University of Iowa. Housing was a terrible problem in Iowa City at that time, but they'd been fortunate enough to find an apartment and were busy getting things lined up for it. One item, a rug that belonged to Frederick, gave us all a good laugh.

Frederick brought a number of good things with him when he returned from Egypt, and among them was this rug that he had left rolled up in his old room at home. He had no use for it during the intervening years, and on one visit he told me that I could take it and use it until such time that he might want it. I did exactly this—the rug went down on our dining room floor. And there it stayed until a letter came from

Frederick in which he said that he could make good use of it in his Bermuda home.

This letter arrived in the morning, and that afternoon Wayne came down and asked me if I had any idea where Frederick's rug could be—he'd spent the morning looking for it, he said, because if it was still rolled up someplace he and Abigail could make good use of it in Iowa City. I took him to the dining room and said, "Well, there's the rug. But it's not going to Iowa City and it's not staying in Shenandoah. By tomorrow it will be at the Cleaner's, and from there it's going right to Bermuda." We were all amused for it seemed as if that rug had just suddenly come to life and demanded attention from every quarter after a long spell of being an almost forgotten object.

Margery was busy about this time making plans to return to California. She had intended to return by train in late August, but then she found out that an acquaintance was driving through in October and since she had never had the experience of crossing the country by car, she decided to wait and ride out. During the time she waited she worked for a couple of doctors and enjoyed it very much. Margery has always gotten a lot of satisfaction from working with people, so a busy doctor's office was practically made to order . . . she really hated to leave it. But at that time her home was still in California, so one morning in October she ran in to tell us goodbye and was on her way.

The winter of 1946-47 was punctuated with visits now and then from Wayne and Abigail, and on one of these trips they purchased their home. It was an old-fashioned house in about the same condition as the house that Russell and I moved into, so we knew what was ahead of them. (And I have the feeling that many of you who are reading this know too exactly what I mean.) But the house they chose was in our neighborhood, and there was room for the garden that headed their list of improvements, so they tackled the job with high spirits as soon as they returned from Iowa City in June of 1947.

By that time too Frederick and Betty were back in Rhode Island with the months in Bermuda behind them. They were expecting their baby in July, and since Frederick wasn't certain where he would next be located, they decided to stay in Rhode Island until after the baby's birth. (Now that Mary Leanna is such a personality in her own right, it seems curious to refer to her as the unknown baby whose arrival was expected!)

June of 1947 brought heavy floods to this part of the country, and Dorothy and Frank had the sad misfortune of seeing their land under water a number of times. It was Dorothy's first experience of seeing a fight put up to save livestock from drowning, and her letters were full of vivid details that we've never forgotten. Day after day it rained heavily during that month, and it was



on just about the worst night of the entire period that Margery arrived in Omaha on her return from California to make her home permanently in Shenandoah. Shenandoah was completely isolated from the world at that particular moment, and she had to stay in Omaha until it was possible to get through.

Margery's son, Martin Erik, was born at the local hospital in Shenandoah on July 8th, 1947, and he weighed in at 6 lbs., 10 ozs. When we wired word of his arrival to Betty and Frederick we knew that they were dumfounded, for all of the scheduled dates had called for the arrival of their baby about a month before Margery's baby. But it didn't turn out that way and Martin got the head start. Incidentally, Jujana's four-year old mind became thoroughly confused as to the status of her new cousin, and for months she referred to him as "our first grandson"; she also said to me when Martin was about three weeks old, "I'm certainly disappointed in him, Mother. He just can't do a thing." I realized then that I'd made the common mistake of drawing too bright a picture of what this new cousin would mean, and he had to get up on his feet before she could play with him as she'd expected to do from the beginning.

On July 26th we received a telegram from Frederick that read: "Mary Leanna sends her love. Mother and daughter very well. Father recovering slowly." None of us had ever been able to extract from Betty and Frederick what they expected to name the baby if she were a girl, so Mother was genuinely surprised and pleased when she found that the names of both grandmothers had been chosen. Westerly, Rhode Island, where Mary Leanna was born, seemed pretty far away to us here in Shenandoah, so we began anticipating Frederick's visit on August 14th when he could give us a first-hand report. His plans called for stopping here a few days enroute to Hawaii since he was due in Honolulu on September 7th where he would take up his work as Chaplain at the Punahou School.

Frederick drove through from Rhode Island and arrived here about noon on a scorching August day. He had stopped for a brief visit with Dorothy and Frank on the way and given them a big surprise for they hadn't known that he would pass through Lucas. However, there wasn't time for much of a visit so they came down later in the week when we could have a genuine family reunion.

Frederick delivered the morning sermon at our Congregational church while he was in town and our entire family was lined up in two pews to hear him. Then we returned to the house for our favorite Sunday dinner and took photographs—it was a happy, happy day. The next morning bright and early he and Dad got into the car and started to California, and my! what an empty feeling we had when they drove away. Dad hadn't been gone on an honest-to-goodness trip for a long, long time and it seemed strange not to have him at home.



From Honolulu came this photograph of Frederick, Mary Leanna and Betty for a Christmas gift in 1948.

The two of them had a wonderful time driving out to California for they didn't hurry particularly and just enjoyed themselves. Those of you who have been readers of our magazine for the last several years may recall the articles Dad wrote about that trip—I know that a good many of you who went over the same roads later told us by letter that you traveled with Dad's articles right at hand in the car so that you could refer to them for advice on various points.

When Dad and Frederick reached Redlands, California, on their trip they stopped for a while to photograph things in color that they thought would interest Mother. At that time too Dad made the rounds of the Redlands hotels to locate a place that would prove to be satisfactory IF he and Mother actually got to make the winter trip that they had long anticipated. He found exactly what he was looking for and told the management that he might return with his wife in January, and I think that when he and Frederick drove out of Redlands that day he was determined that in some fashion he'd get Mother back out there even though she was still convinced that she couldn't travel so far.

In Los Angeles Dad and Frederick said goodbye and Frederick drove on up the coast to San Francisco where he had to pick up his plane reservations for the flight to Hawaii. (His car went over by boat.) After Dad had spent a few days with his brother Harry's family he took a plane for Seattle, Washington, and from there went to Mount Vernon to visit relatives whom he hadn't seen for years. He didn't know, at this time, that his return trip would be a little different than he had planned, but while he was in Mount Vernon he received word from us here at home to go by train to Denver and meet Mother there. Then the two of them, plus Dorothy and Donald, could all drive back to Shenandoah together.

I have to laugh when I recall how we engineered this Denver trip! Mother had gone to visit Dorothy on the farm at Lucas, and while she was there we just plain up and decided that it was time she had a trip, her first honest-to-goodness trip in seventeen years. We knew that if we had everything settled before her return she would be amiable enough about falling in with the plans, so we made

the hotel reservations, lined Donald up to do the driving, and even contacted Dorothy on the slide to see if she could accompany Mother. In those days it was very hard to get hotel reservations during the tourist season in Colorado, but John Henry Field, Uncle Henry's son, came to our rescue and ran down exactly what was needed.

When Mother returned from Lucas we told her what was scheduled, and after her first shock she agreed that if ever she expected to travel again it was time to get started—certainly she couldn't know what was possible (or impossible) until she gave it a try. So one morning in August we got up early and said goodbye to Mother, Dorothy and Donald; they were actually on their way.

The entire trip was a great success. Mother found that she could drive as far as North Platte, Nebraska, without getting overly tired, and she discovered, as soon as they reached Denver, that a hotel wasn't beyond her powers. The day after they arrived in Denver Dad came in on a morning train, so they had the rest of that week together and took some grand drives to Colorado Springs, Seven Falls, Big Thompson Canyon, and other points of interest.

By mid-December plans had been completed for the folks' first trip to California. It was decided that during Donald's Christmas vacation he would drive with Dad to Redlands, and that way they could have the car out there to get around in. As soon as the car was safely there Donald planned to fly back to Ames, and then on January 5th Mother and Aunt Helen Fischer were to go out by train. Aunt Helen hadn't been in California for a number of years and she was most eager to see her daughter Louise Alexander and her two little grandchildren, Jean and Carter, so it seemed as if everything had finally worked out in fine fashion.

However, Dad came down with one of his annual bouts of flu about December 20th, and it looked for a while as though nothing would turn out right! Everybody was at home (aside from Frederick's family) for Christmas, and most of the presents were a little different than customary since they had to do with travelling. We still didn't know Christmas night when we went to bed exactly what would happen, but we *hoped*!

About nine o'clock the day after Christmas Dad and Donald got in the car and headed west. Dad told us later that when they reached Nebraska City he felt so sick that he thought it would be smart to turn around and go back, but Donald urged that they try another fifty miles before they gave up—and at the end of fifty miles there was no doubt—they'd go on to California.

Here at home we were all anxious and excited, waiting for January 5th to roll around. We were simply bound and determined that *nothing* would prevent Mother and Aunt Helen from boarding that west-bound train at ten o'clock, and I think that even Martin, who was only a few months old



sensed that things were going on! We had a farewell dinner for Mother about six o'clock that evening, and then around seven-thirty Howard and Wayne started up to Omaha with the two travelers. We'd mentioned this impending departure on our program, so a goodly number of our Omaha friends went down to the Union Station and greeted Mother and Aunt Helen as they waited for their train to be called. Mother said later that hearing the well wishes of her friends made the trip seem more real than anything else.

Two days later we had a wire from Mother saying that she had arrived in San Bernardino right on schedule, that Dad was there with his car to meet her, and that she could hardly believe it was all true! They had a wonderfully happy and restful winter in Redlands, and the only shadow on the entire trip was when Aunt Helen became so ill and had to spend several weeks in the hospital. Aside from this their first winter in California was all they had hoped that it might be.

Here at home we pitched in to show the folks that they need have no qualms about anything they'd left behind. Margery and I broadcast the program every day, Wayne kept the office functioning, Howard took over the chores that Dad had done formerly, and even the grandchildren perked up and sailed through the winter without a mishap! Margery and I will never cease to be grateful for the fact that you accepted Mother's absence from the program with such good grace and supported us so loyally through those months.

Towards the end of March the folks prepared to start home, and this time it was Howard who made the trip out to drive back with them. They came the southern route, but even so they ran into heavy snow and were held up for a while. Mother said that she really enjoyed the experience — that henceforth she wouldn't have to feel that all of the exciting misadventures happened to everyone but her. This comment came when she told about half-freezing to death in the tourist cabin where they'd taken shelter from the storm.

A few days after the folks had returned Russell, Juliana and I, with a friend of ours, Grace Loonan, set off for Florida. After we left Saint Joseph it was all new country to us, and we had a wonderful time going through Natchez, New Orleans, Mobile and all of the places I'd had a hankering to see since early childhood when Elsie Dinsmore called up the deep South. Incidentally, by this time many of you have seen some of the kodachromes we took on that trip when you were present for a showing of our colored pictures titled "Hawaii and our Southern States" so it gives you an idea of the country we covered.

We returned to Shenandoah on April 3rd, Mother's birthday, and heard the news that we had a new baby to look forward to in our family (this was to be Emily), so all in all it was a joyful homecoming.



This picture of Mother and her little granddaughter, Mary Leanna, was taken on a sunny morning in Honolulu, December, 1948.

On Mother's Day in 1948 Mother and Dad drove to Des Moines to visit Aunt Martha Eaton and Uncle Harry, and then went on to Ames for dinner with Donald. He had made arrangements to work for a steel company in Chicago as soon as summer vacation began and didn't expect to be home until the job was over. Incidentally, this job turned out to be a hum-dinger! I don't know of any place hotter than a blast furnace in Chicago during the summer months, and that's where Donald spent the bulk of his time.

Word from Betty and Frederick about this date brought the news that they were spending six weeks on the "other side of the island", a phrase that didn't mean too much to any of us, aside from Wayne, since he was the only member of our family who had been in Hawaii. However, the letters that we received from them during the summer began to contain increasingly urgent invitations for Mother and Dad to visit them during the coming winter. At first none of us took them seriously. Hawaii seemed terribly far away as far as Mother's traveling abilities were concerned, and we were all unanimous in feeling that it would be "nice" but out of the question. Future events were to prove us 100% wrong.

The first of August brought a number of business changes to our family. At that time we accepted the fact that we'd just plain outgrown the space in which this magazine was handled and were simply compelled to move to bigger quarters. It sounds matter-of-fact stated in this way, but you've no idea how much feeling was involved! We could hardly bring ourselves to the move! And I might say that it took a drastic fact to bring us to it, the fact that Wayne couldn't find room for his desk. When you can't find space for a desk it's time to make a change.

If you're a new reader you may be wondering now where we were handling our magazine so I'll tell you: everything concerned with Kitchen-

Klatter took place under the roof of what was intended originally for a garage! This was a nice big double garage that Dad built the summer before they had their disastrous wreck in September. If I recall correctly the work was completed on it only a couple of days before they started on that ill-fated trip.

At first the files that contain your names were kept in the small office in the house where we have always broadcast our program. In no time at all they crowded us out of there and were moved into the garage. At first they fit nicely against one wall out there and since we only had one car there was ample space (where a second car would have stood) to have a couple of desks, one for Dad and one for Gertrude Hayzlett who helped them at that time. So far so good.

But the first thing we knew there had to be more space for files and more space for desks, and the upshot of this was that Dad no longer had space for his one car and it had to stand outside. About this time he decided that he'd give up the idea of having a garage and simply convert it into an office. Insulation was put in, the double-doors were sealed into a permanent wall, heating was installed, new windows were cut, and there we were with a very convenient office just a few steps from the back door.

This carried us nicely for a while, but eventually so many names were added to the files that it looked as though they'd have to be suspended from the ceiling, a solution not at all practical or realistic. Consequently a couple of small additions were built and once again the pressure was eased. But none of these expedient measures stopped the dam for long, and by the time Wayne returned to take over many of Dad's duties we were actually in the predicament where not one more living, breathing creature could go into the place. One had to be an acrobat to get around the rows of desks and files. For almost a year we carried on in this crowded fashion and then we broke down and decided to make the change. There was an opportunity to remodel an area that stands adjacent to the printers who get out Kitchen-Klatter, and we took it.

Remodeling was started during August in that year and we had the immense satisfaction of seeing convenient, well-organized offices whipped into shape. Not the least of our satisfactions was the realization that no longer would Dad and Wayne have to carry heavy sacks of magazines from the printers up to the office, a job that Dad had done all alone for years before Wayne came back and one that was definitely too great a strain for a man of his age. Henceforth the magazine could be brought directly from the printers through a big door and placed on a huge table to be handled. It was a great day when they hauled in that first load! But anyone who has ever had his occupation right under his own roof, so to speak, will understand why we hated to give up the old garage and take advantage of other quarters.



At about the same time we started remodeling down town offices we embarked on a business project that was immensely gratifying to all of us since we have been flower lovers from 'way back. Mother and Dad had hoped for years that they would be able to handle nursery stock of the very finest quality for our friends who wanted to have the satisfaction of growing trees, shrubs and flowers, but the countless details connected with it made them decide to wait until Wayne and I could be here to help. We were just as enthusiastic as the folks, so it was a momentous and important day when the four of us sat down together to write our first nursery catalog. It's always hard for us to imagine a business where people are hired to do such jobs! We've worked together for so long as a family that we cannot conceive of what it would be like to manage in any other way. And we enjoy every minute of it.

Also in August of 1948 we gave up the afternoon radio program that Mother had carried for so many years and started our present morning program at eleven o'clock. With this, plus moving our offices, it was a very busy time.

On August 17th the Field family circle was broken when Uncle Harry Eaton passed away following a long period of poor health. Mother and Dad had been in Des Moines to see him and Aunt Martha only a short time before, and although he suffered from an heart ailment he didn't seem to be feeling much worse than he had for quite some time; therefore they were shocked when word came that he had passed away in his sleep. Had he lived until October he and Aunt Martha would have observed their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Under the circumstances we all felt great admiration for Aunt Martha when she came to Shenandoah on August 22 in order that the entire Field family could be together for the first time in many years. The occasion for this reunion at such a date was the fact that Mother's brother, Sol Field, and his wife Louise, had come from their home in Gerber, California. The trip was a difficult one for them to make because of Uncle Sol's health, but he had a strong feeling that if he were to see all of his sisters and his brother again he should make the effort, and consequently they came back just before Uncle Harry's death.

On the evening of August 22nd a wonderful reunion was held at the home of Aunt Helen Fischer, and for the younger people present it was a great privilege to hear the stories of by-gone days that were recalled. Before the light faded there were pictures taken, the first complete family group pictures that had been taken since Aunt Martha's and Uncle Harry's wedding in 1898. What a blessing it is that everyone could be present that evening for pictures because they were to be the last ones that could ever be taken of all seven brothers and sisters.

Early in September Donald returned to Ames from his job of repairing



Grandmother Drifmier was thrilled to see how much Emily had grown when she returned from the winter that was spent in Hawaii and California. Juliana and Martin gave her a heartfelt welcome for they've always missed her sadly when she is gone.

blast furnaces and entered Iowa State College for his final year. He spent a few days here at home between Chicago and Ames and from his color we decided that he couldn't have been darker if he'd spent five years in the tropics.

By October Mother and Dad had finally capitulated to Frederick's and Betty's insistence that the trip to Hawaii *could* be made. They made all of their plans for going first to California and then on to Honolulu, but I'm sure that Mother didn't really believe that it could actually come to pass.

\* \* \* \* \*

About nine o'clock on the morning of November 4th, 1948 the telephone rang at the folks' house. When Mother answered it she heard Wayne say, "Emily is here. She weighed seven pounds and everyone is fine."

It so happens that the babies in our family have been named a long time in advance of their arrivals, so when the announcement is made it always sounds as though someone well known to all of us has finally decided to drop in. Certainly they never seem like strangers.

Emily's arrival was the event that Mother and Dad had been waiting for as the keynote of their winter plans. They didn't want to leave town until she was safely here—and babies are notoriously undependable. But Emily made it on the scheduled date and this meant, in turn, that the folks could begin making definite plans to leave.

About a week later their good friend, Ethel Wells of Greenfield, Massachusetts, arrived to spend a few days here; she expected to drive to California with the folks. We all had a pleasant time together, and then bright and early one November morning Dad's car pulled away from the house and they were on their road to Redlands. We regretted that they couldn't stay long enough for a

Thanksgiving dinner, but it was cold that fall and it seemed unwise to linger and run the chance of driving into bad storms. They made the trip out safe and sound, and when word came that they were once again located in Redlands we could all take a deep breath and relax.

However, there wasn't a very long time to think of them comfortably situated in Redlands for they had reservations on a Pan-American plane for the Los Angeles-Honolulu flight on December 7th. I don't believe they gave nearly as much thought to this trip as did those of us who were here at home! As the time drew closer we had spells of getting cold feet and wishing that they'd decide to take a boat—or *something!* We didn't like the idea of the folks in a plane above the Pacific on the longest over-water flight that is scheduled anywhere in the world!

All day on the 7th we had them very much on our minds, and when night came we really thought of them; the next day when we compared notes we found that we'd all spent the night in the sky! It was about noon when a cablegram came telling us that they'd had a grand flight and were both fine—and then we could really relax.

Hawaii was a wonderful experience for them. Frederick's home was on the beautiful campus of Punahou School, and they were surrounded by the kind of tropical beauty that we midwesterners only dream about. During the month they spent there they had many opportunities to get out and see just about all of the sights that Hawaii can offer, and in addition to these outings they had the pleasure of meeting Frederick's and Betty's many friends. Then too, Christmas spent so far from home didn't seem as curious as it might have been because Mary Leanna was right at hand to take the place of her little cousins.

Here at home everything ran smoothly that winter. Dorothy and Kristin came down for a short visit with us after Christmas, and Donald was here during the holidays, but otherwise we were all busy holding up our respective ends of the family boat. I think the only alarming incident of that winter was when Emily had to be hospitalized with bronchial pneumonia, rather an unusual illness for a baby only three months old. But aside from this worry we were fortunate enough to skim through without real trouble!

On January 15th the folks left Honolulu for their return to California, and it's a blessing that we didn't know under what circumstances they left. That date marked the beginning of the most severe storms the Island of Oahu had known for many years, and the plane that the folks took was the last one out for several days. There was a torrential storm going on when they reached the airport (although this didn't prevent quite a crowd from going to see them off), and when the time came to board the plane they were in the midst of a heavy wind and electrical storm. I'm frank to say that I'd been scared to death to start out in a plane un-





This is the most complete family group we've ever been able to manage. Only Frank, Dorothy's husband, was unavoidably absent on June 25, 1949 when it was taken. In front are Juliana, Kristin, Martin, Mother, and Frederick holding Mary Leanna. In back are Russell, Howard, Margery, Donald, Dad, Lucile, Dorothy, Abigail holding Emily, Wayne and Betty. We were facing a blinding sun and consequently it isn't a good picture, but it's the last group photograph that has been taken.

der such conditions! However, the airlines know what they're about, and very shortly after the plane left the ground they had risen above the storm and were flying through a beautifully clear night. It's a shame Frederick couldn't know this at the time for he put in an awful night worrying about them. Shortly after he drove away from the airport the wind reached such a velocity that it damaged buildings on the field, and right on those city streets he ran into such heavy water that he thought for a moment they'd have to swim for it. You can imagine what his sensations were when he thought of the folks in that plane!

Their return flight was as smooth and uneventful as the trip out, and at two in the afternoon they touched ground once again at the Los Angeles airport. Back here we'd figured the time element so accurately that we telephoned Uncle Harry's home and the phone rang just as the folks walked in the door. We were certainly very, very happy to hear their voices and to know that they were home again. (At that moment California seemed like "home" after thinking of them in Hawaii for so long.)

By the first of April they were back

in Shenandoah; Ethel Wells again accompanied them on this return trip and spent a few days here before going on to Massachusetts. Martin remembered them during their absence and was simply beside himself when "Granny" and Grandpa got home. Juliana and Kristin were equally thrilled, so all in all it was an exciting (and noisy) homecoming.

Donald spent the summer of 1949 in Ames where he was completing work for his degree in Engineering, and then in August the folks drove there for his graduation. He was the last of their children to finish his college education, and for the first time in thirty-four years they didn't have a child in school. It wouldn't have been so long, of course, except for the fact that both Donald and Wayne lost several years because of World War II and had to finish after the long interruption. Immediately after Donald's graduation he left for Anderson, Indiana to take a job in the field for which he had prepared himself.

Uncle Henry Field's death in October, 1949 was a sad wrench for all of us. We realized that his chances for recovery were very slight, but we hoped against hope that he might make it. This was not to be, how-

ever, and we had to accept the fact that Mother's family circle had been broken. The memory of services held for him is still so fresh that it doesn't seem necessary to repeat any of the details here.

And so this brings our American Family up to a night in 1950. Since our story was started we've seen the country change from open prairie to the highly complex farming country that we know today. We've seen the old order change and the new order begin, a new order that even now is the old order, that is slipping away to make room for still another new beginning. As I write these words and conclude these chapters of our Family Story I find myself wondering who will pick up these threads in years to come and record the events that lie ahead? Juliana . . . Kristin . . . Martin . . . Mary Leanna . . . Emily . . . David . . . well, perhaps one of them will decide someday after turning through these pages that it's time to put down what happened after 1950. I wish that I might bequeath them a happier date from which to begin. I trust and pray they'll be able to record events that took place in a world at peace, not torn by war.

The End





Just before we sat down to the dinner table on the Sunday when Frederick delivered the sermon at our Congregational church, Russell took this informal picture. Dorothy, Mother, Dad and Margery are in the front row. Frederick, Wayne, Lucile, Howard and Donald are in the back row.

(Reprinted from Kitchen-Klatter Magazine, October 1947)

Dear Friends:

With this issue of our magazine we have come to a milestone in our family life, and we seven Driftmier children (we still think of ourselves in that fashion even though middle-age has overtaken some of us!) want to pause for a moment and take note of many different things that have led up to this time when we are all together.

One of the compensations that comes with growing older is the ability to appreciate profoundly and fervently all of the things that we took for granted when we were young. Nine years ago when we were last together we children took it as the natural course of events that our family circle should be unbroken. We didn't know then that so many years would lie between us and our next meeting. We didn't know that the war would scatter us to the far corners of the earth. But probably even if we had known we would have taken for granted the fact that when it was all over we would be reunited once again.

Now, during this reunion, we realize that we are wonderfully blessed to be able to gather under the roof of our family home. We realize too that we are rarely fortunate to have both parents with us and in good health, enjoying daily life, enjoying their children and grandchildren. No longer do we take these things for granted. We know now that not many families are so fortunate, and this knowledge makes us doubly aware of the fact that Providence has touched us kindly.

As you can well imagine, we've had countless things to discuss during the short time that we are together. "Do you remember?" is heard time without number—and it's hardly necessary to add that there are many different versions of the same incident! Of course there are a great many things to tell about our separate homes because nine years ago only one of us was married; today five of us have established our own homes. You can be sure too that we've heard many war experiences related, many references to Alexandria, Brisbane, Min-

nao, Okinawa, and other dots on the globe that people remember only too well.

But along with all these stories of far places and old times were some conversations that concern you, our unseen but well-known family friends. We grew up with you, so to speak, and therefore you are as much a part of our lives as the people whom we saw throughout those years. We know now, because we are older and just a little bit wiser, that your faithful friendship with Mother removes her from what might be the prison of a wheelchair, into a world in which she has the priceless joy of feeling needed and of help to others. There is no happiness in this life as great as the happiness that comes from being of service. And this happiness you give to her.

It seems so difficult in our present world to stop and express what we really feel. All of us know the unspoken words that we regret not having said. All of us long for an opportunity, never to be recaptured, to return and speak of the gratitude that is in our hearts. It is because of this that we decided to stop tonight, in August of 1947, to tell you how much we appreciate what your friendship means to all of us. We do not know what lies between us and our next meeting, and we have learned not to take for granted the fact that there will be another opportunity to talk together and "think about" writing this to you.

It is hard to sift through a thousand different things and find just the one thing that tells you more clearly than anything else what you mean in our lives, but after much discussion (yes, and argument!) we have finally decided upon the one incident that seems to sum up completely what we want to say. And it is this:

When we were all much younger and just beginning to go out into the world in various ways, Mother would always say to us the night before we started, "Now go out into the office and get down the boxes of names for

all of the towns you'll be passing through. Copy off at least one name for each town, and then if you get into trouble of any kind all you'll have to do is get in touch with them and they'll help you out."

Because we were young we didn't think that anything could really happen, but to ease Mother's mind we always went out to the office and dutifully traced out our route on the road-map, consulted the files for each town we expected to pass through, and copied down the names. Then we took it back in to Mother and she studied it thoughtfully.

"Now, let's see, in Creston you can call Mrs. A. L., in Greenfield, Mrs. J. F., in Des Moines, Mrs. J. J., or Mrs. S. C., in Marshalltown, Miss A. M., in Grundy Center, Mrs. H. F. . . " and so forth through the entire trip. At the time we thought that it was just a "notion" of Mother's. Now that we have children of our own we understand the limitless trust and faith she placed in family friends who would not fail us if we were in need. You didn't know this, of course. You had no way of knowing that some car on the highway carried young people who had your name tucked into a coat pocket.

We grew up on stories of pioneer days when covered wagons stopped for help at our grandparents' farm, and the friendliness of Mid-western people became very real to us. Perhaps that is why we started out on our journeys with the feeling that we could turn to family friends, that they stood ready to help us if we were in need.

There are no balance sheets kept in friendship of this kind. Occasionally opportunities arise when we can be of help to you, and we are grateful for them. Certainly Frederick felt that it was a privilege to visit the graves in distant lands of the boys who went from your homes never to return. In his letters to us he expressed the happiness that he felt in being able to take photographs and write letters to the old friends who had turned to him for help. And we understood how he felt.

The loyalty and friendship that goes from your family to our family can never be wiped out. To those of us who live here, the chain has been reformed and we have taken up once again the pattern that was broken temporarily when we lived far away. To those of us who return for visits, old names and old memories come to life again. We realize now what a unique and wonderful experience your friendship has been, and before we separate, before this reunion is only a memory, we want you to know what is in our hearts tonight.

Howard  
Paul  
Dorothy  
Frederick  
Wayne  
Margery  
Donald































